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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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EDITORS, THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

JANUARY, 1934

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Solar Oxygen

WE read in *The Secret Doctrine* that "neither the stars nor the Sun can be said to be constituted of those terrestrial elements with which the chemist is familiar, though they are all present in the Sun's outward robes. . . . Our globe has its own special laboratory on the outskirts of its atmosphere, crossing which, every atom and molecule changes and differentiates from its primordial nature" (ed. 1893, I, 638).

These words suggest that the spectroscope cannot tell us the real composition of any material body outside the earth's atmosphere. When the spectrum of a star indicates the presence of hydrogen, for example, there is no proof that this stellar "hydrogen" is identical with the hydrogen of our laboratories. The most that can be said is that the spectroscope reveals a correspondence between terrestrial and celestial elements. The astronomer tries to translate the language of the stars into the earthly terms which are all that we know. Sometimes, he is hard pressed to find a terrestrial equivalent for what he reads in the heavens. For example, the *New York Times* (October 25th, 1933), reporting the discovery of "oxygen-lines" in the Sun's corona, stresses the fact that this solar oxygen, though generically identical with the oxygen of our air, has certain peculiar qualities.

> For the first time since the spectra of the corona in eclipses of the sun were observed by astronomers more than sixty years ago, science now has a definite clue of what the corona is made, and incidentally of what goes on there in the heat of the outer atmosphere of the sun. Three of the strongest lines of the sun's corona, Dr. Harlow Shapley [of the Harvard College Observatory] announced, have been identified as being due to neutral oxygen atoms in the high solar atmosphere, these atoms being in a peculiar state of excitation. The mysterious radiations of the sun's corona have been attributed for years to a hypothetical element "coronium", much as the light of the distant nebulae was long attributed to a hypothetical element "nebulium". A few years ago the mystery of nebulium was solved when it was found that highly ionized oxygen and nitrogen were

responsible for the nebulae's radiations. Similarly, in recent years, the mysterious light of the aurora has been found to be due to ionized oxygen. Oxygen is described as ionized when one or more outer electrons are stripped from the oxygen atom.

The Real Sun

As Dr. Shapley points out, similar highly excitable states of oxygen can be duplicated in the laboratory. This might be taken as evidence that the matter of which the corona is composed, is not very different from the matter of our planet. But the nature of the Sun is not understood by science, as astronomers themselves must admit, since they are unable to explain the source and maintenance of its apparently inexhaustible power. According to occult tradition, we do not see the real Sun but a mirage or reflection of it. This would seem to imply that the real Sun is of such subtile substance as to be beyond the range of our bodily senses; and that the visible orb of day is a great vortex of gross matter which is excited and set in motion through an infusion of the "vital electricity" radiated by the real, invisible sun.

There are some suggestive comments upon the mystery of the Sun, in a letter received by A. P. Sinnett in 1882 and signed K. H.:

> [The corona] is simply the magnetic and ever present aura of the Sun, seen by astronomers *only* for a brief few moments during the eclipse, and by some of our chêlas—whenever they like—of course while in a certain induced state. A counterpart of what the astronomers call the red flames in the "corona" may be seen in Reichenbach's crystals or in any other strongly magnetic body. The head of a man—in a strongly ecstatic condition, when all the electricity of his system is centred around the brain, will represent, especially in darkness, a perfect simile of the Sun during such periods. The closer to the head or the aura-emitting body, the stronger and the more effulgent the emanation (due to hydrogen, science tells us, in the case of the flames); hence, the irregular red flames around the Sun or the "*inner* corona". The fact that these are not always present in equal quantity, shows only the constant fluctuation of the magnetic matter and its energy, upon which also depend the variety and number of spots. . . . The further the emanation shoots out, the more it loses in intensity, until gradually subsiding it fades out; hence the "outer corona", its rayed shape being due entirely to the latter phenomenon whose effulgence proceeds from the magnetic nature of the matter and the electric energy and not at all from intensely hot particles as asserted by some astronomers. . . . The Sun we see is not at all the central planet of our little universe, but only its veil or its *reflection*. . . . We *know* that the *invisible* Sun is composed of *that* which has neither name, nor can it be compared to anything known by your science—on earth; and that its "reflection" contains still less of anything like "gases", mineral matter or *fire*, though even we when treating of it in your civilized tongue are compelled to use such expressions as "vapour" and "magnetic matter". . . . The Sun is neither a *solid* nor a *liquid*, nor yet a gaseous glow; but a gigantic ball of electro-magnetic Forces, the store-house of universal *life* and *motion*. . . .

Life-Rays

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Not only the visible sun but every manifested thing reflects an essence, a noumenon which is invisible to the physical man. Physicists tacitly admit this principle, inasmuch as they represent the chemical atom as a system of infinitesimals, the objective form of which we cannot even imagine. It appears

that even biologists are now beginning to look beyond protoplasm for the ultimate cause of life.

Certainly they still cling desperately to the supposition that life and consciousness are by-products of protoplasm; but they have begun to suspect that protoplasm itself is produced through the action of radiant energy upon inorganic matter. According to the latest theory, rays with certain wave-lengths are continuously generated and emitted by the body, and these rays are the principal factors in the manufacture of organic compounds. This theory was recently outlined by the well-known surgeon, Dr. George W. Crile of Cleveland, in a lecture at Chicago before the American College of Surgeons, the following excerpts being taken from the report of his address in the *New York Times* (October 8th, 1933):

> The processes of life and the mystery of matter involve a mechanism very similar to a radio set, depending for their growth, development and functioning on a definite series of radiations of various wave-lengths, emanating from the living substance of the body. This, in essence, was reported to-day by Dr. George W. Crile. . . . The medical man of the future, Dr. Crile said, would "tune in" on the living body as one does now on the ordinary radio. By "listening in" to the short waves and the long waves, transmitted by the various organs, he would hear the "symphony" played by the living organism and would determine the rhythms of the "dance of life". Long before there was any outward evidence of disease, the physician-radio-engineer of the future would thus be enabled to tell by the "reception" of the "life-waves" whether they were playing a melody of health or whether they were signalling an SOS. The life-rays, Dr. Crile added, have a range of wave-lengths from the ultra-violet, through the visible spectrum, down to the infra-red. These rays are generated and emitted during life, and change with the state of activity of the protoplasm. . . .
>
> It is a proper balance of the infra-red, the visible, and the ultra-violet radiations that makes possible the building up of the dynamic mechanism which we call protoplasm, Dr. Crile said. "On this conception, protoplasm is no more mysterious than is a combustion engine. In either case the energy depends upon oxidation in the course of which solar energy is released. It now appears probable that when we wish to increase the activity of the brain, for example, it is necessary to alter the wave-lengths so as to increase the percentage of the short-wave radiation within the brain, and this is done by increasing the action of the thyroid gland and the adrenal gland. . . . Already a rapid penetration into the mysteries of protoplasm has been made by the application of physical and chemical laws, and we may believe that this advance will not stop until we are able to define, clearly and simply, what a living thing is and the principles by which it is governed. . . . The present trend of thought regarding the nature of protoplasm is strongly mechanistic. Already we know that the phenomena of life are only phenomena of energy; already we know that all energy is interpreted by the known laws of physics and chemistry; already we know that no living thing can exist in the absence of chemical activity. . . . There will be developed in this coming century such an exact understanding in physical terms of the requirements of protoplasm. . . . that there will be a new means of estimating the state of activity of the protoplasm of the body by measuring the relative percentages of the different parts of the spectrum emitted by different parts of the body."

The biologists are at last becoming interested in something more subtile than the physical structure of protoplasm; but Dr. Crile's remarks indicate how deep-rooted is their materialism. Like the physicists, they have come into contact with phenomena which, in our opinion, are reflections or projections of astral or

semi-astral forces. However, again like the physicists, they persist in the effort to interpret these phenomena in conventional materialistic terms. Most physicists are at least aware of the inconsistencies and contradictions of their position, and in enlightened moments are ready to admit that they really do not know what they are talking about. But Dr. Crile is representative of the biological and medical mind, when he affirms that already "we" know much about the mystery of life; and that what remains to be known will be discovered during the next hundred years.

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that his life-ray theory is concerned only with the possible ways in which radiation can be directed by mechanical means, to stimulate or to retard the growth and activity of various organs of the body. Nevertheless, it seems probable that these vital waves emanating from the organism constitute part of the luminous atmosphere or aura, the counterpart of the solar corona, which, according to the testimony of clairvoyants, permeates and surrounds the living body. One recalls the teaching of Mesmer and the alchemists, that every creature is charged with a magnetic fluid, and that physical health depends upon the harmonious reciprocal action of the positive and negative currents of this fluid. It is even possible that, without realizing the fact in the least, biologists have stumbled upon a manifestation of "the alternate functions of the Fiery Lives, as Destroyers and Builders" of the physical body of man (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 283).

The Physician-Radio-Engineer

In the concluding words of his address, Dr. Crile explains some of the things which the "physician-radio-engineer" of the future will do to those of us who may have the misfortune to be alive. It is charitable to suppose that he did not intend to be taken seriously.

> The well child, under the guidance of the physician, will probably be trained in a very different way than by our present haphazard methods, because as time goes on there will be discovered what measures will build up and what will deteriorate the child's nervous system and mentality. When the mechanism that operates the brain is understood, then there will be an accurate knowledge as to what patterns of action should be placed in the brain. . . . With a better understanding of the laws of life and of heredity, the reproduction of the unfit will be reduced, and as a consequence there will emerge the beginnings of a superior race. Within certain limits, therefore, the physician of the future will be able to control the growth of the body and the development of the mind. He will acquire such a knowledge of biochemical and biophysical processes that he will be able to guide his fellow-men as an engineer of living processes.

This is a nightmare, a veritable paragon among nightmares, even in an age which is rich in such productions. It cannot possibly come true, of course, for one must believe that Nature itself would destroy the human race rather than allow such a thing to happen. Moreover, one doubts whether an advanced black magician could ever expect to wield any power like this. It is, of course, quite possible that someone or other will try to plant patterns in the brains of guinea-pigs, if not of babies. But regardless of anything that experimenters

may do or not do, it is horrible enough that such a conception should be born in the world of ideas.

The notion that states of consciousness can be manipulated at will by chemical and physical means, is the *reductio ad absurdum* of biological and medical materialism. It presupposes that Nature is devoid of purpose, and that her processes have no meaning or value apart from what we impose upon them. The materialist loses the sense of the mystery which underlies everything that is. He ceases to be aware of the unfathomable depths within every phenomenon. We actually know nothing of the real nature of fire, for instance, but the materialist can actually convince himself that he knows everything about it. It is quite inevitable, then, that he should look upon a child as a radio-active mass of protoplasm, and nothing more. But this child is, in truth, a soul, potentially if not actually, a *mysterium magnum* in the profoundest sense. It is grotesque to imagine that any analysis of its "life-rays" would provide us with the key to its destiny, even if it gave some clue to its aptitudes. The utmost that could be expected would be that the "physician-radio-engineer" would be no more inaccurate in his guesses than the average astrologer or palmist.

But even assuming that one knew the talents buried in a child's consciousness, this would not imply that one had the duty or the right to hypnotize him, or to shoot rays at his brain. "The power of right action", said Plotinus, "is the model of the art of minding one's own business." Those who have attained human perfection, the Masters of Wisdom, must know, as no "physician-radio-engineer" can ever know, what patterns should be placed in the minds of men; but it is inconceivable that they would ever exert artificial pressure to force any human being, without his consent, to become what they desire him to be.

Anyone who is not blinded by materialistic and mechanistic preconceptions, can understand why it is a crime against Nature to meddle with the consciousness of another person. In the measure that it is successful, it is black magic. If the purpose of Nature be the evolution of true Self-consciousness, the individual soul or even the potentiality of an individual soul, is a sacred object. It is the Law, respected by God Himself, that the soul must create itself. The advice and inner support of those who have already travelled the road to perfection are indispensable at every stage of the way; but it is none the less true, as the mystics and sages of all ages have testified, that the soul must freely choose at each instant the course which it will follow.

Doubtless, many men who might be poets or statesmen, are obliged by circumstances to be factory hands or office clerks. But why do we assume that this is necessarily a tragedy? The Oriental, who believes in reincarnation, would say that these limiting circumstances were specially designed by Nature or Karma to provide new opportunities for self-conquest. Why should anyone fancy that he is fitted to take the place of Karma as the judge of what is best for anybody else?

The Principle of Adjustment

The mania for interfering with Karma, that is, with normal evolution, is not

peculiar to the medical profession. Economists, social workers, politicians are haunted by it. It is indeed as universal as the glamour which the lower self of man always interposes between truth and the mind. The lower self, being essentially unreal, is not at home in a real world. Thus it cherishes the illusion that it can alter facts, that it can change the actual order into something more conformable to its own nature. All of us know how this illusion is cultivated and maintained. A glamour, a fanciful picture of what we desire, is substituted for the reality which we do not want to see. Under the impulsion of the force which we put into this mind-image, we proceed to act as if it were true.

A certain native caution prevents us from taking many liberties with the laws of the physical world. Unless a man be obviously insane, he does not jump from a cliff, merely because he regards the principle of gravitation as a nuisance. But this instinctive realism tends to disappear, when we begin to function upon the plane where moral laws are operative. Especially in ages like the present, when the restraining influence of religion has been weakened, the lower self feels free to do what it likes, without reference to any external ethical standard.

Whether we approve or not, such a standard exists. It contains within itself the power of enforcing its decrees, a power which is as certain in its effects as any physical force. It acts to re-establish the "balance of Nature" on the moral plane, whenever this is disturbed by the thoughts or acts of men. It is the principle of adjustment, the *vis medicatrix naturæ*.

Man inflicts upon himself much unnecessary suffering because he is unwilling to submit to this law of adjustment which governs all human relations. He can understand how a living body or even an inanimate thing, like a ship, moves to return to its normal position when it has been thrown out of equilibrium. However, he does not recognize that the same tendency to find adjustment asserts itself when his moral nature undergoes a derangement. He resists and complicates what ought to be a simple process of restoration to health. In extreme cases, he resists to the point where any recovery of balance is impossible. Like a badly handled ship, he capsizes and sinks. That which Nature cannot heal, it destroys.

The Disease of Pacifism

One can observe this principle of adjustment at work in every field of human effort, for it acts whenever man attempts to force reality into the mould of an unreal mind-image. There is the delusion of internationalism, for instance. The actual facts of the lives of nations reveal, with astonishing clarity, the inevitability of war in the present state of the world. The realist, who believes that some nations are much more deserving of survival than others, can have only one desire, that they shall be strengthened and united. He knows that their strength and their unity are the only guarantees that there will be even brief intervals of recuperation in the incessant warfare between good and evil which will only cease when evil disappears from manifestation. But the pacifist internationalist, unwilling to face these facts, bewitches himself into believing that

evil is non-existent or that it can be placated by the general disarmament of its foes. The result of fifteen years of pacifist agitation has been, not to advance their doctrine of peace, but to multiply the causes of war,—if only because the only concrete objective of the advocates of disarmament has been to weaken France, to divide the Allies and to strengthen Germany. They have unbalanced themselves and others by substituting illusion for truth. To-day we can perceive how the law of adjustment is working to restore the balance. It is mercifully making the nature of the German nation so manifest, that even a child can understand.

However, Karma can only reveal the truth; it cannot compel men to look at it. In spite of the extraordinary publicity which is given to events in Germany, the pacifist virus has scarcely slackened its activity. Unfortunately, among the worst infected are the teachers of youth. This is true even in France, where pacifism has become an issue in some schools. In the United States, many colleges are veritable "jungles of delusion". For example, we quote the following from the *New York Sun* (November 2nd, 1933), the italics being ours:

> A resolution against any co-operation with the United States War Department in the event of war was approved by two hundred Columbia University students at a pacifist meeting last night. The delegates to the meeting, selected at random from among those who signed a petition that the meeting be held, represented every department of the University. *It included twenty faculty members.* . . . Eleven student speakers expressed a preference for jail sentences as conscientious objectors rather than service in co-operation with military forces. *J. Bartlett Brabner, assistant professor of history* at Columbia, presided.

Experience forces us to conclude that all the powers of Nature cannot heal us, unless we co-operate with them. Surely this is as true of nations as of individuals. The pacifist who persists in his refusal to co-operate with Nature, is a traitor to civilization itself.

The Unity of Time

If professors of history really meditated upon the subject which they are employed to teach, they would be more impressed than they seem to be, by the continuity of human experience. As Bergson has made clear, time is not a succession of separate moments, but an indivisible unity. The past flowers in the future; the future is born in the past; the present holds the complete heritage of the past and the whole promise of the future. Therefore, no man, no nation, no race can forget or deny its past and continue to live. It is impossible to create a future which is not an extension and transformation of the past. The French tried to do this during the Revolution and are still paying dearly for the experiment. The sense of the unity of time seems to be the basis of ancestor-worship; and it is notable that the longest-lived civilizations known to history, such as the Egyptian and the Chinese, were those which were the most deeply imbued with respect for tradition.

People are beginning to wonder whether modern civilization is going to disappear, like all the civilizations of the past, beneath a wave of barbarism. In

any event, it may be taken as axiomatic, that if it can be saved by any means, it will not be through a "new deal" which differs in principle from any of the "old deals" that brought their measure of security in the past. If the experience and hard-won wisdom of thousands of years be of no avail as guides to the solution of the problems of the Machine Age, no solution will be possible. The principle of adjustment will have thereby demonstrated that our civilization is too inhuman to be preserved.

The Way of the True Reformer

It is possible, however, that our predicament is not so serious as it seems; that the real problem which we have to solve is much simpler than we imagine. The modern man is obsessed by the notion that humanity can be made over as a whole and at once. He loses sight of the individual in the mass, and tries to quicken the tempo of evolution by legislation. But the study of Nature and history shows that no enduring reform has ever been inaugurated in such a way. A new truth which comes to stay emerges slowly out of the matrix of old experience, nor does this truth appear everywhere instantaneously. It takes form in a particular locality before it passes into the world at large, and it makes its initial appeal to a small and compact group.

The Masters and the Sages who have done the most to enrich the consciousness of mankind, did not begin by broadcasting their views far and wide. They translated universal truths into the language of their race, even into the dialect of a province, for only in this manner could they reach the individual. Humanity is composed of concrete men and women; it is not an amorphous mass which can be moulded at will into any shape. Therefore, the true reformer addresses the individual, urging him to make fruitful his personal heritage which is also the heritage of the race and region to which he belongs.

A similar idea was expressed recently by the French royalist, Charles Maurras, the occasion being the annual commemoration of the birth of Mistral, the Provençal poet:

> The study of Mistral is of the greatest interest, nationally and internationally. The laws which determine the right direction of the mind, the essential method of thought and action, can be re-discovered and, above all, rectified by an understanding of Mistral's undertaking. Whereas all our wonderful men of intellect, misled by a false education, pretend to themselves that they can reform the vast world by giving it a code of laws, as extensive (that is to say, as vague and irrelevant and impractical) as possible, Mistral directs our attention to the dwelling, the hearth, the church-tower, the village, the province, the language, . . . in brief, to all that which concerns those nearest to us. Let us first settle these problems. Let us first establish right relationships with the things which immediately surround us. Let us watch over the heritage which we have received and which we must transmit, and let us meditate upon the conditions essential to this transmission which has been entrusted to us. We must inform ourselves of other things: we have no desire to exile ourselves from the human race. But if we would really serve humanity, let us serve, respect, venerate and observe the laws of our own native force, of our own native health; and let us ask the secret of this health and force from our ancestors. So wise they were, so very wise, since it is thanks to them that so many treasures have come down to us (*L'Action Française*, September 7th, 1933).

Security

Considered in these terms, the real problem of this century does not differ from that of any other. It is to transmit to future generations the patrimony which we have received from the past, to add to it—if we have anything to give—but at the very least, to preserve intact the essence of what has descended to us. Our material possessions, our machines, our arts and sciences, may be lost and forgotten. That does not matter greatly, for such things come and go in the course of the cycles. What is of the first importance, is that a sufficient number of individuals in each generation shall confirm by their own experience the truth, old but ever new, that in essence man is a spiritual being, a living soul.

There is need of security for the soul. Many will ask what sort of security is possible in these troublous times. In the *Figaro* (September 13th, 1933), the French poet, Francis Jammes, undertakes to answer this question. He notes the instinctive desire of every man to ensure some measure of repose for his old age, some measure of material well-being for his descendants. The depression, however, has forced even the least imaginative to understand the insecurity of all forms of physical wealth. But the longing for security remains, deep-rooted in the human heart. Francis Jammes suggests that in its pure state it is the aspiration of the soul for the spiritual solitude which is a primary condition of its growth. It is "the flight of the alone to the Alone".

Before the spectacle of this financial disaster, which has affected so many families that were the honour of France, I no longer look back with regret to the house of Jean-Jacques, already too small, but to the patriarchal tent which could not be alienated. That which is nothing but desert cannot be legally seized. It is safer than the thicket into which a maddened civilization is driving us. Noble is the desert, which causes the soul of a Foucauld or a Psichari to blossom. It is poor and it is bare. . . . I recall Abraham who was born not far from Babylon, where had already appeared, in the midst of a luxury altogether modern, the vices which inevitably brought about the decadence of a dynasty of tyrants. The patriarch turned his back upon Babylon and buried himself in the desert, where he found peace,—like the good carpenter, when he saved Jesus from Herod. I suggest that in the midst of so many trials which assail us during this century, and of which insecurity is not the least, there is only the desert where we can find refuge. Some one will say: Is this a jest? Of what Arabia Petræa or of what Sahara do you speak?

There are those who have already understood. To the others I shall repeat this sublime sentence which I found in Villiers: "There will always be solitude, in this world, for those who are worthy of it."

FRAGMENTS

WHEN the dark hours come, lift up your hearts and rejoice. Rejoicing is not for times of happiness, lest we be carried away on the tides of feeling, or, lulled in a false security, lose our direction on the Path. In the glad days be thankful, but on guard; they are perilous. We have stepped into the Great Lure, and a personality, quick to break its bounds, may at any instant betray us.

For those and those only, whose natures are undivided, is there safety in the peace and joy we crave. Life mercifully brings conflict, to hedge the soul about from the enemies within its own gates, as well as from the enemies who ceaselessly watch outside. Therefore I say, in the dark hours lift up your hearts and rejoice, for the Good Law has taken note of your infirmities, and, in its vast compassion, provided for them; patient with your protests, tolerant of your misunderstanding, holding you against yourself until such time as you have gained the power to stand and face yourself unaided.

The purpose of life is found in the interior life, in the life beyond the veil: we are not meant to feed on husks and rinds. There, is happiness, undimmed and unalloyed; a sunshine that never scorches nor dazzles; that stimulates true growth, not bringing forth to destroy, as is the wont of that which prospers here.

We never see the true sun, they tell us, only a false appearance. What a key to the meaning of all outer life! God's philosophy is spread forth entire in Nature, only we, unheeding, make few applications of it.

Realities like these are easily tested, could we but live and act, for a sufficient while, on faith and trust. Those who have thus put it to the proof, bear a united testimony.

Meanwhile I say again: In the dark hours lift up your hearts and rejoice.

CAVÉ.

THE COLLEGE PROBLEM

THE parallel between our own time and the period immediately antedating the French Revolution is becoming more and more marked. Now, as then, there appears the group of "intellectuals" with a similar plan for hastening the enlightenment of mankind, with the same confidence in science as a guide to the good life, and the same willingness to cut loose from accepted traditions in morals, economics and government.

It is the open season for the doctrinaire reformer. Warnings against trespass are down, fences are broken, responsible landowners are too bewildered to use their shot-guns effectively, and the poacher is everywhere setting his snares and filling the columns of the press with specious articles buttressed with graphs, statistics and the results of questionnaires.

To him we must attribute most of the clamour about a "college problem". He is particularly desirous of harnessing the powerful physical and emotional forces of young men and women to his cause, and it is to his best interests to cajole and flatter, to provoke nervous tensions, to sow the seeds of discord and sedition, and to make it appear that higher education is floundering in a sea of futilities. American college youth, however, is generally apathetic to the appeals which periodically send his European cousins into the maelstrom of political upheaval. In part an index of the immaturity of our college population, this indifference to radical propaganda is a fortunate fact for society.

But though the college boy is quite willing to let the reforms and the reformers alone, it is sometimes his misfortune to be betrayed by those who are supposed to be his rightful guardians. There is a "left wing" in education, very doctrinaire, very noisy and very powerful. It has the common school system in its grip, and it is reaching out for the control of the college. It is fertile with programmes for a "Super-University", a "New Era in Education", or a "Renaissance of the Greek Spirit"; but, whatever the title, the same sinister elements, so familiar in the subversive writings of the French pre-Revolution agitators, always appear. Rules, schedules, routines, required courses, all these come in for attack under the old, old doctrine that man must be set free from the fetters imposed by artificial conventions. To quote from a recent editorial pronouncement: "Department divisions . . . must be broken down to abolish senseless prerequisites, harmonize divergent and prideful policies, and utilize the re-directed rock-bottom energies of the depression student."

The colleges have seen repeatedly the dire consequences which follow the attempt to put into practice the mistaken notion that freedom from restraint ushers in better conditions. Yet the lesson does not sink in, and from time to time, a plausible apostle of the enlightenment can still win the consent of a body of trustees or legislators to an operation upon the student body. The experiment follows an invariable and well-defined course. It begins with a fanfare of trum-

pets from the press announcing "the greatest advance ever made in higher education", and one which is to waft a crop of fledgeling American eagles to Olympus. Tired professors mop their brows and sink back in their chairs, waiting hopefully for the end of the first four-year plan. They vision a long line of athletes in Parthenaic procession emerging from the portals of Academia ready to make mincemeat of all the problems, big and little. Only an occasional grumpy pedagogue peers over his spectacles, rubs his nose vigorously, and mutters something which sounds like "Fiddlesticks!". But who pays attention to a relic of Victorianism when the sun of a New Era is rising?

"But oh my prophetic soul!" Rumours, disquieting rumours soon arise to disturb the pretty idyll. These new Greeks like to lie abed all morning just like ordinary American students. The professors send forth a questionnaire, and a statistical study of the matter reveals an undoubted correlation between lying abed in the morning and staying up all night. They approach their studies languidly, and have even been known to nod over the Socratic dialogues and Homer's catalogue of the ships. No soilure mars the beautifully bound, deckle-edged volumes of documented and footnoted "Hellenic Studies", so thoughtfully provided by the library. To make a sad story short, the unfettered eagles never get beyond the pinfeather stage, trustees and legislators begin to grumble about "professors' notions", the purse strings are drawn shut, the golden haze disperses, professors sigh and go back to marking Blue Books, and there is a steely glitter in the eye of the grumpy pedagogue.

But does the sponsor of the "interesting experiment" admit defeat? Not a bit of it. His logical faculty informs him that the idea is flawless, and he finally evolves the thesis that there is no solution of the college problem apart from a revolution—presumably an economic and social revolution which will kill off the reactionary trustees and legislators, and put liberal professors in control of the purse strings.

This incident, patterned after a recent model, is introduced here, not to impugn the high motives of the sponsor, but to illustrate the signal deficiency underlying most of the reform movements of the day which fill the world with confusion and end in futility. One might suppose that the practice of educating his young over a period of some thousands of years would have given man a little insight into "the objective truths of the premises adopted" (see the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, Vol. xxxi, p. 10), and that this insight would render unthinkable any radical departure from accepted tradition. Some of us are convinced by far-flung studies, extended sometimes over half a lifetime, and others know from direct experience, that the principles of conduct laid down in the immemorial codes are not the ephemeral notions of a day, or the work of a body of democratic legislators serving a policy of personal or party expediency, but are based instead upon repeated experience of the fact that certain causes are invariably followed by certain effects. The explanation of the present confusion of ideals, pedagogical and otherwise, lies in an utterly mistaken notion of progress, which, in its turn, rests upon the false philosophy made popular by the scientific revolution of the Nineteenth Century. The evolution of mankind is

read in terms of a triumphant progress from brutishness and superstitious fear, toward a society guided and ruled by the light of reason. Therefore it follows that ancient prohibitions and commandments are to be replaced by new principles, which rest, it is assumed, upon a clearer understanding of man's animal needs as they are revealed by scientific study. This attempt to overthrow ancient ethical and moral prohibitions and sanctions has already led to appalling results in individual lives. A long line of ambitious world-reforms and peace conferences has ended in distressing brawls, yet the mad prophet of the "Age of Reason" starts up again serenely, armed with the inevitable graphs and statistics, and prepared to spend more millions of other peoples' money in subduing the natural man through peace pacts, and saving the world by sentimentalism.

If there be a real college problem apart from the distempered fancies of the doctrinaires, it is only part and parcel of the one central and serious problem whose roots are imbedded in the unregenerate nature of mortal man. The college faithfully pictures the lineaments of the democracy which supports it, and it becomes the target of every reformer who hates to see his neighbour's face reflected alongside his own. Yet the very extravagance and paradoxical nature of the criticism to which the college is subjected, should prove to any normally balanced observer that it is largely the froth of extremists of all sorts and degrees, who find themselves powerless to warp the institutions of higher learning into instruments for the propaganda of their own special views.

The only legitimate criticism of the college which the democratic public is entitled to make—that same public which veers with every changing wind—is identical with the criticism which can be levelled at every social institution to which the democratic public has given birth. The college may be singled out for special censure by an informed student of Theosophy, but the criticism he might make is one which, in the nature of things, the public is hardly likely to understand or appreciate.

There are doubtless many parents who are bewildered and disheartened as they listen to the continual din of criticism, or read the startling items of college news which a degraded press loves to serve up to satisfy a degraded public taste for sensationalism. Dare they entrust the education of their children to such a protean monster? Shall they risk the loss of all that their care and patience have established through eighteen or more years of training? To such parents a short analysis of this much maligned American institution may be of service. If we can penetrate the haze of prejudice, extravagant criticism and adventitious accretions, we may discover that in spite of buffets and betrayals a worthy spirit still lives and works at the heart of the college. We shall seek to show what is its true and central function in society, and then to point out the nature of the forces which have deflected it from the fulfilment of its proper purpose.

A college stands to its constituency as the brain-mind stands to the body. It is the organ which mediates between the desires of society and the satisfaction of these desires. Its function is to send forth trained men and women equipped to guide the social will toward effective action. Society needs food, clothing and shelter. These desires, these demands of the body politic, exert a pressure upon

the college which is met by the establishment of vocational courses and professional schools. The arts of agriculture and horticulture and animal industry; the arts of textiles and ceramics, of architecture and engineering and medicine—these and a dozen others constitute responses to the legitimate vocational demand of the social body on the college brain. Society also demands the satisfaction of its æsthetic and emotional needs. Man wishes to sense more intimately the currents which play through his common social nature, and which set him apart from the brutes. He desires to surround himself with the products of creative genius embodied in rhythm, colour and graceful form, and to appreciate the subtile values which they carry. So the college responds by instituting instruction in literature and in the various branches of æsthetics. Finally, man desires to understand the structure and processes of the world in which he finds himself. So the college introduces the study of the physical and biological sciences. More than that, he seeks to range the heterogeneity of his immediate impressions of the world into an order which shall be satisfactory to the intellect, and in response to his high desire to transform a "chaos to the sense" into "a cosmos to the reason", the college gives instruction in philosophy. Vocations, humanities and sciences—these are the aspects of the triune man, of the Soul which is *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*. And just as the Soul is One behind its triple manifestation, and each of its aspects shows forth the other two, so the triple college disciplines are not sharply sundered from one another. Their artificial disjunction marks a concession to the limited powers of finite minds. There is an æsthetics of science and there is a science of æsthetics. Yet, on the other hand, confusion results when the specific quality of any one of the three disciplines is over-emphasized in the field of either of its fellows. Overtones should not become dominants. It may be remarked in passing that literature, in particular, suffers to-day from this very defect. The scientific-analytical element which is not its natural concern, and which should have remained subordinate to the emotional and intuitive element, has been imported wholesale into a province not natural to it, and the heavily documented doctoral thesis in literature, with content and significance sacrificed to matters of form and historical source, is the lifeless result. In abandoning his own peculiar duty to take up the practice of an alien discipline, the professor of literature bears testimony to Krishna's words; that "the duty of another is full of danger".

From the analysis just concluded it would seem to follow that the true function of the college is patent, and that no particular problem should arise to harass either educator or public. It has, indeed, been argued that faculty members are employees of society, and that their sole concern should be to carry out the wishes of their constituency effectively and skilfully. Society pays their salaries; society has the right to demand whatever type of teaching it prefers. If society wants its children taught Mongolian, the colleges should forthwith establish chairs of the Mongol language and literature. This simple principle of conduct, based upon the natural law of demand and supply, would be perfectly just and lawful if it concerned a natural system and a natural desire. Unfortunately, the human social organism is the most unnatural of all the organisms "in the

three worlds". If parents, students, faculty members and trustees were wise beings; if, during the thousands of years of historical experience they had really learned anything; if they could be depended upon to distinguish between a false dawn and a sunrise, and not go running about all over the place whenever an errant meteor appeared; if, in short, they knew that "the universe exists for the purposes of soul", and that the body wars against the soul, then, social pressure, guided by wise desires, would meet with a quick and harmonious response from the college.

Every right-minded parent knows the longing which lay at the heart of Enoch Arden: "To give his babes a better bringing up than his had been, or hers." The desire is instinctive, and is an expression of the Will which moves the worlds along the path of evolution; but its formulation in mental and moral terms accords with the character and outlook of the parents, and is debased everywhere by egotism and the popular philosophy of success. At the lower, levels it becomes the fierce desire to coerce the forces of life to one's selfish will and to win emotional and mental goods without payment. The son must be taught, not only how to triumph over his fellows in the race for wealth and position, but, at the same time, must win success easily, since work is slavery and the prevalent American dream is the "lucky deal" which wins "big money" with the adulation of the envious and sycophantic. At the higher levels of the social ladder, parental desires for their children's future are little more than refinements of the cruder longings of their younger brothers. Any college dean can testify to the fact that there is often a cold, calculating selfishness among those whom the world regards as refined and cultured, which is more deplorable than the "Elizabethan gusto" of the vulgar. Such a parent insists that his son shall be shown the way to a selfish success in one of the professions. First of all, there must be a reasonable guarantee of a comfortable income and the assurance of a certain social standing. Rarely is there the least indication that the parent recognizes the dangers which attend a higher education when separated from moral and ethical checks. Much less is there evidence that he suspects the need for a measure of integrity, and a certain humility when dealing with truth. The false teaching that the powers of nature are to be exploited to the uses of the natural man, has tainted all ranks of society, and the college is selected as the instrument which is to cater to this perverted desire.

This selfish ideal of education, and the pressure which it exerts upon the college, could, perhaps, have been effectually resisted if college faculties had been true to their trust and their duty. Upon the college teacher, in no slight degree, rests the responsibility for the confusion which has come upon the world. Before we touch, however, upon the most serious matter of his defection, we may look at certain failings which he shares with the rest of humanity, but which, because of his peculiar position, are enhanced to a degree which is abnormal and even pathological outside college walls. An inflamed egotism is the common foundation whereon rest all his other serious faults, such as cocksureness, vanity, jealousy and combativeness. Several factors contribute to this unfortunate situation. There is the well-known tendency of the intellectual to make life

subservient to ideas. In the world of practical affairs, the business house which is conducted according to personal predilections and false premises, promptly crashes about the ears of its owners, and the architect who attempts to run up a fancy skyscraper without regard to the laws of strains and stresses, is made to repent of his notion. But men who work with the combinations and developments of ideas may spend a lifetime in erecting an intellectual scheme which has no relation to either the visible or invisible structure of the world. Such a thought-spinner becomes dangerous to society when he is permitted to put his notions into operation. This unfortunate tendency to soar away into the ether is mitigated in the colleges to a certain degree by the very nature of the subjects which are taught. The sciences and humanities are rather securely tied down—the one by the inescapable facts of physical and biological nature, the other by the inescapable facts of documented human history and literary relics. It is upon those matters where facts are less well authenticated, that speculation runs riot and spins a tissue of whims and fancies. The subjects of education, economics, sociology and modern psychology attract "immature minds in mature bodies" as a honeycomb attracts bees, and the vagaries of their devotees are calculated to make the angels weep. One of the signs of the times is the sudden popularity of these subjects. According to a recent editorial in a college journal: "The curriculum of the modern college must centre around the Social Sciences." This is, of course, a reflection of the emotionalism which attends the current pathetic dream of the New Era.

In addition to the well-known tendency of the intellectual to subordinate life to ideas, the college teacher is exposed to the full force of a temptation which is checked and tempered for those who are in more intimate contact with the world. With a greater liberty of action than his non-professional brother, and with the sense of self-identity centred in the notoriously separatist intellect, he tends to become a petty and tyrannical dictator in his small realm. Private egoisms swell to amazing proportions, and the inevitable result is a perpetual clash of personalities. The proponents of the disciplines of arts, humanities and sciences, for example, struggle respectively for place and power. This is the major battle, whose echo reaches the public, and whose varying fortunes of shock, triumph and disaster are registered by the press. The pendulum of college policy swings to and fro, now veering toward science and practicality, now careering toward an exaggerated humanism. The vocationalist triumphantly cites the case of the Irish maid in the Emerson family, who, ignorant of transcendentalism, knew the nature of young calves, and successfully lured the obdurate mammal into the barn, after the Emersons, father and son, had pulled and pushed in vain, front and rear. "I like people who can do things", the perspiring Concord Sage records in his journal; and in that remark he sounds the war cry of the vocationalists.

The humanist-classicist seeks to perpetuate the European tradition of polite letters. He regards vocationalism as a vulgar assault upon the best that has been thought and said, and he resents the machine age which owes its genesis to science.

The third contender wields the flail valorously for his ideal of dispassionate scientific research, freed alike from money-grubbing and idle dreaming. An incident will serve to orient him clearly before us. A professor of science, who had just published the results of his laborious researches, was asked by his practical college president: "Mr. —, what is the value of your discovery?" Back came the answer like a shot: "Thank God, it has no value whatever."

In pensive mood one sometimes recalls a poem which was popular in the "Reading Book" of a former century. A group of learned gentlemen is provoked to acrimonious dispute over the colour mutations of a chameleon. One declares:

"I caught the animal last night
And viewed it o'er by candlelight,
'Twas black as jet!"
"Black", cries the other in fury,
"Do you, sir, think I've lost mine eyes?"
" 'Twere no great loss", the friend replies.

Finally the chameleon was forced to settle the matter by declaring: "You all are right, you all are wrong", whereupon he proceeded to point a much-needed lesson anent the virtue of tolerance.

It is evident, then, that the unfortunate features which characterize the college teacher are such as result quite naturally from his type of training and environment. He is but a man of the world whose intellect has been forced forward regardless of the harmonious development of his spiritual nature, and who has been released from the social friction which tends to hold unbounded egoism in check. In this lies the key to the deeply serious nature of his sin. He is *a man of the world*, and it was his duty to have been *a man of God*. His true function is not alone to fulfil the desires of the social body, but to guide those desires along right channels.

In the ancient theocracies the office of teacher and priest were one. His function was to mediate between the Soul and the world, to teach men the nature of lawful desire, and to train them in the disciplined use of will, heart and mind so that they might at last attain to true individuality. Authentic guidance and leadership come only from the Soul; all rightful authority is authority delegated from above.

In the growing darkness of *Kali Yuga*, the spiritual connection which bound the teacher to the Lodge was overcast and forgotten. Self-will and prideful violence and worldliness broke the link of spiritual transmission, and he became the victim of fluctuating opinion, psychic contagion and fierce egotism. False to his trust, he continues unconsciously to betray the society which it was his business to direct aright, and his teachings fill the world with confusion and bewilderment.

Many matters become clearer when viewed in the light of this suggestion. Mr. Judge remarked that vanity loves to "assume the teaching perch", and it has been pointed out many times that when the true Light is lost, the victim, unable longer to distinguish between the true and false, sets forth his own phosphorescent psychic imaginings in place of spiritual teachings.

There is, however, another peculiar factor in this matter. It must be set down to the credit of the college teacher that he has kept alive in the world a respect for honest intellectual work, and has preserved and transmitted the creations of genius in which "glows a pure and original fire". He recognizes and loves the higher psychic elements which endow the sciences and humanities with magnetic appeal. Moreover, he gives of his very best to his students.

We read that the first Teachers of mankind stamp indelible impressions of Truth upon the nascent mentality of the first Races, and that these are the "innate ideas" which survive the obscurations and mutations of the long ages which come after. Man who has walked with the gods in his childhood can never forget the experience; so long as he remains human, the voice of faith is stronger than the doubts and negations of the mind. So the teacher, the spiritual descendant of those who received the primal truths, and whose lips spoke the primal revelation to mankind, can, likewise, never free himself from a sense of peculiar responsibility. He is haunted by a vague memory of the ancient *guru-parampara* connection, and he hears the faint echo of Krishna's words: "I declared it to the Solar lord. The Solar lord imparted it to Manu, and Manu imparted it to Ikshvaku. Thus the Rajanya sages knew it, handed down from Master to disciple."

Separated from the Holy Office, the teacher seems still to sense the vanished glory of a lost estate and a forfeited power, and he translates it into a call to guide his students along the ways of his own ideal, based generally on a lingering afterglow of traditional religion. But lacking the Light of guidance from above, and relying on the "light of men", too often he leads his followers into swamps of doubt and confusion.

So we return to the question which perplexes the parent who has caught a glimpse of the true issues which lie behind the vagaries and fancies of the personal life. Shall we counsel him to entrust the higher education of his children to men who are certainly no better and no worse than their cultured patrons? Again we need to pause and look deeper.

In ancient Egypt, at the time of the Middle Kingdom, the people rose against their rulers and seized power unlawfully. They violated the sanctity of the temples, looked on the sacred symbols, and read the holy rituals transmitted by the gods through the descending links of the Solar hierarchy. And though, henceforth, they might demand Osirification, we know that the rituals were inoperative, or, if virtue still remained, it was the terrible virtue of black magic.

Triumphant democracy likewise has forced wide the doors of the college, and many

> ". . . for their belly's sake
> Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold."

But Truth is veiled to their unworthy eyes; its embodiments in the symbols of form, colour, sound and ideas, are empty of meaning, and the "rituals" of class and laboratory instruction remain inoperative in the hands of an unworthy priesthood, or, in deadly parallel, lead to debasement. Thousands of young men pass annually through college halls, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, under-

standing nothing. Yet the Vision Splendid is possible to the pure in heart, even in a college. The essence of Divine Wisdom does not change.

The college, like The Theosophical Society, spreads its offerings before its members, but it cannot turn dullards and worldlings into wise scholars.

Not long ago an advanced student in science, after reading Darwin's *Fertilization of Orchids*, was speaking of the wonderful style of the author, and of the glow of enthusiasm which shines through his words, lifting the book far above current uninspired scientific contributions to knowledge. Then he made a significant comment: "It all goes to show that science should be in the hands of a cultured and appreciative class who are not always trying to drag it down so that they can make money out of it." Such a remark would have won the approval of Plato. It carries a thought which is rarely recognized to-day, when the main object of scientific research is to force nature with lever and screw to yield up her secrets for the delectation of the natural man. The criticism applies likewise to the whole range of liberal and classical studies, which, in all but the rarest cases, are made to further the growth of "the barren fig tree".

The parent asks whether he dare entrust his son to the college. Perhaps the real question is whether we dare entrust the college to his son. Has he shown any fitness for the high privilege? Does he respond intuitively to noble thought and noble example? Has he a sustained thirst to know and to understand? Has he a quick intellect, a gracious humour, a developed imagination and a retentive memory? Has he a level head, and an eye which can distinguish between an honest domestic hen and a dove of peace? Has he a high ideal, with power and brains to back it up? In a word, has he shown evidence of those qualities whose deeper and fuller expansion leads to chêlaship? If he can pass this test, then the college is for him; he is one of her own, and in the years to come he may help to re-establish the ancient connection with the Lodge. The heart of the college is not looking for genius, but is seeking character and integrity. There are dangers in every form of human activity, since dangers are inseparable from life itself. But young men must learn to stand on their own feet. They cannot always be shielded by their parents, and if the years of parental care and protection have not given a normal boy any feet to stand on; have not provided him with an armour of morality and a sword of self-reliance to protect him in the battle against worldliness, then he must learn the severe lesson of defeat and remorse. A college is not a reform school or a place for moral weaklings and cowards. A son will come into contact with the best that has been thought and written, and he may also come into contact with the worst. Can he distinguish between the two wisdoms, and, having distinguished, will he choose the better rather than the dearer?

If he has been brought up to love the good, the true and the beautiful, he will not find himself a stranger in an alien land. He will discover students who, dissatisfied with lifeless erudition, are hewing out roads for themselves in solitary study and in those long evenings of talk, so dear to the young man's heart, where the problems of earth, heaven and hell are scrutinized and debated without fear or favour. He will find instances of high integrity and burning enthusiasm; he

will come to distinguish between crystal-clear thinking and the turbid currents of popular opinion. Let him seek out his own kind among students and faculty and, having found, shut away the trivial, the ugly, and the unworthy.

The wise parent, and the parent in particular who is associated with the Movement we hold so close to our hearts, longs to see his son become a power for good in the world, a tempered instrument in the hands of the Masters. If he is to do his best work there, he must be able to inspire confidence in men and women. Educated people distrust the untrained speaker or writer whose factual knowledge is blurred, and whose appeal rests upon emotionalism. We have been told that we must be able to say to those who are honestly seeking light amid the confusions of the modern world, not: "This is what the Masters say", but: "Here is the principle which fits the facts".

In brief summary, then, we have seen that the "college problem", as it is presented to the world by the body of agitators, is largely a fiction of their own devising to further their own subversive schemes. We see that the original and true function of the college was to mediate between the Lodge and the world, and that the betrayal of a sacred trust has shut away the light of guidance and left it at the mercy of opinion and popular pressure. There would seem to be but one way in which it may redeem itself. The broken link must be reforged, the *guru-parampara* connection re-established. If that could be successfully accomplished, The Theosophical Society might pass out of existence. Where shall young men be found who will essay this high and difficult task if it be not among the sons or close friends of those to whose hands Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge entrusted the desperate mission for which they had given their lives? The intelligent college youth is truly seeking light in this "New Era" of political confusion and economic bewilderment. He is weary of lifeless erudition and meaningless research for trivial knowledge. His intuition is sound, and if the Ancient Truths of his own Christian Faith, for example, can be presented to him, freed alike from the dead letter of current materialistic theology and of some so-called "Theosophy", and can be supported by a solid wall of scientific facts and analogies, he will give them his earnest and enthusiastic support.

To-day the direction of his superabundant energies constitutes a constant problem to college faculties. This is one reason why they are forced to put up with the absurd hullaballoo of intercollegiate athletics. A student body, emotionally exhausted by the wild enthusiasms which attend a football game, is not likely to get into mischief. Better to raise the flood gates and let the waters roll harmlessly to the sea, than set up a pressure which may burst out into a destructive flood. Oh yes, the pity of it!—energy running to waste, enthusiasm dissipated, which, if controlled and directed, might be used to storm the heights of heaven. Perhaps one gets some slight inkling of the price which the Lodge is paying for man's salvation. Words written in another connection come to mind: "What they have done they have done at frightful cost." That is the keynote of the whole evolutionary drama. R. E. T.

HORUS OF EDFU

The winged globe of Egypt, symbol of the radiant and soaring Spirit.—FRAGMENTS, Vol. I.

IN thinking of many of the great gods of antiquity, it is much to be regretted that almost invariably we surround them, whether consciously or unconsciously, with so dense an atmosphere of unreality that they appear to us far off, unsubstantial, like dream-figures looming dimly through a mist. Hidden behind a thick crust of accumulated legend which, through the passage of the ages, has too often become crudely fanciful; disguised by grotesque tales of every imaginable description; addicted to amorous adventures—quite evidently distorted truths—these great Beings have become not only hazy shapes without definite outline, but, in some of the texts, are actually repulsive. Students of Theosophy, reading between the lines, naturally recognize many of these texts for what they are—vivid records of sacred and secret ceremonies, initiations and fragments of the Mysteries obscured by almost impenetrable "blinds". To a certain extent, this fact is also realized by some recognized authorities of to-day, but the majority mistake the "blind" for the reality, seeing in the texts no more than a surviving record of gross, primitive orgies.

It is, however, true that these all-powerful gods of ages ago are approached, by some, from the opposite direction—as too transcendent to have been human, even in the most comprehensive sense: they are Cosmic like Illimitable Space, and beyond definition; they are abstract like Universal Intelligence, and we are awed into silence. For although, theoretically, we know that transcendent, universal Forces may be personified in a single individual, many of us feel the need of something more tangible, more approachable. Why, therefore, do we not oftener think of these great "gods" of an infinite past, in their divinely human aspect, entering as an actual fact into the lives of the people who loved them, and whom they loved with a wise and tender compassion?

Men of to-day who are considered experts in the wholly modern study of folklore, will tell us that "the gods" of antiquity are mere fabrications; that primitive man created them out of his own fancies, and in response to a need—though they fail to account for the source, the *inner* source, of that "need". It was necessary, they say, for primitive man to find an explanation of the awfulness of the sky at night—the sky with its ever-watching stars; of the moon with its changing forms and its strange, intangible influence on the wild life of the desert; of the gloomy forests, and why the light never penetrated there; of the deep, swift-coursing, sleepless rivers; most of all, of the sun, passing majestically, day after day, across the heavens, disappearing at night—where? Primitive man wanted an explanation of the mysteries of the whole natural world in which he found himself, and so, forsooth, he *invented* his gods! Modern anthropologists ignore the simpler interpretation as well as the nobler one; men

like Frazer, Reinach, Tylor, distinguished as they are in their limited fields, seem curiously to have missed their way. Could even primitive man, to whom strange powers are attributed by modern folklorists, create out of nothing a whole pantheon of gods? Could even a consuming need for heavenly protection and guidance win a response from emptiness? Students of Theosophy would answer that the Lodge of Masters has been in existence since the beginning of time, and that Elder Brothers never turn deaf ears to frightened children; that in the very helplessness of the early races lay man's power to attract the unfailing compassion of the Lodge. Moreover, all through history—and before historic times—as far back as we can go, there are traditions or records, as everyone knows, of Great Souls who have appeared in the world of men, whether the world was, at the time, primitive or highly civilized. Ra and Osiris seem to us abstract, remote, but we do not think of the Master Christ or of the Buddha in that light. Wherein, then, lies the difference? Perhaps it is merely a matter of time, of the slow sweep of the ages. Had Ra and Osiris lived a few thousand, instead of many hundreds of thousands of years ago, they might still have the power to illuminate, as they had in the days of Egypt's splendour. But why think of them as belonging only to the past? Can Beings so exalted, so sublime as they, really have vanished like smoke-wraiths? Where are they now? What if we were to think of Ra in his glory as still in existence, somewhere, even to-day? What if we were to think of Osiris the great King who, through countless centuries, was the sure friend of the poor, the lonely, the neglected—were to think of him as alive and still spending himself because of his quenchless love for struggling humanity? Ra was the first King of Egypt, so said tradition —a tradition which no passage of time could dim. Is it conceivable that he was snuffed out as a candle is; that he was extinguished by a breath of wind? Osiris gave his life for the people and the land he loved. Is it rational to suppose that he could merely disappear—and then forget? Where have they gone, Ra the Supreme, the August, and Osiris the Comforter, the Well-Beloved? May we not even ask: Is "ancient Egypt" herself really dead? There must surely be many students of Theosophy who would answer that, in their belief, this could not be.

How much more convincing, therefore, to think of the great gods of old, not as a series of grotesque, man-made inventions, creatures with more power but with fewer morals than the early races over which they ruled; not even as transcendent abstractions, but as "Perfected Men" who taught infant humanity *through* and *by means of* Nature. If we think of them as emanating from the Lodge, as part of the great Theosophical Movement, they become at once intensely real and living; they seem to spring from the grey background into which we, in our ignorance, have thrust them. The Egyptians themselves always spoke simply but definitely of their gods as "The Great Shining Ones", a description which is far too graphic to have had its origin in an abstraction, or in a man-made creation. What if these "Great Shining Ones" were, in reality, still with us, brooding over us? What if they were living still—somewhere in the inner world of reality?

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On the lofty, encircling walls of the splendid Temple of Edfu in Upper Egypt, on the inner side, and therefore safely within the temple precincts, is graven across its otherwise bare face, an ancient "legend" which has come whispering down to us through the ages—the story (still unfinished, so tradition says), of the Battles of Horus, "The great One of Valour", against Set, "The evil One", "The Enemy of Mankind". The Temple of Edfu, as it stands to-day, is of late date, having been erected in Ptolemaic times; but the priests who supervised its building, put definitely on record the fact that they were merely replacing an earlier structure which Zozer (IIIrd Dynasty, and so among the first historic Kings of Egypt), had raised after the plans of the famous Imhotep. This celebrated "Wise Man" of yore, "Chief Adviser to the King"—Imhotep, renowned for his knowledge of all things pertaining to the ancient Wisdom of the priests, versed in magic, in medicine, in architecture—is one of the colossal figures of those remote days, and, while he is wrapped in a certain amount of mystery, such was his distinction that Egypt remembered and revered him always and, in later ages, worshipped him as one of the lesser gods. Therefore his building of the IIIrd Dynasty temple at Edfu, which, no doubt, he was consciously and purposely doing on the site of yet earlier shrines (successive shrines going back and back to the dimmest past); his having drawn the very plans for the temple, his having been responsible, as it were, for its very existence—all this carries special weight. For his priestly wisdom would almost certainly have given him an inner, an authoritative knowledge of the past, of truths which, no doubt with the closest secrecy, had been preserved from remotest times. We are for this reason surely justified in believing that the so-called legend of the Battles of Horus against Set, may be grounded on actual, concrete fact; that Horus "The Slayer", while partly typical (as indeed, like most heroic figures of antiquity, he must remain), had also individual, concrete existence in those golden, bygone days when the foundations of Egypt's glory were being laid. That he belongs to the exalted Hierarchy where the other "Great Shining Ones" have their place, there can be little doubt.

The worship of Horus was not only very wide-spread, but was also very diversified. He is found under many aspects. It is perhaps, however, as Horus of Edfu that he is the most striking, and in this aspect he belongs to the Ra cycle rather more than to the cycle of Osiris. The Temple of Edfu, as we find it to-day, is one of the best preserved among those which remain to us. This is not strange when we realize how comparatively late it is, although its good condition is also due to the fact that it is built on an unusually solid substructure. Lying on the left bank of the Nile, roughly speaking half way between Luxor and the first cataract, and some distance back from the river, the gigantic pylon can be seen from miles away, towering above the surrounding, cultivated land, and seeming to hold at bay the encroaching desert with its shifting sands. As we approach the temple, travelling across the wide plain which separates it from the river, and more particularly as we draw near to the entrance pylon which, despite the fact that the cornices are now gone, is indescribably dominating, over the lintel of the gateway, and so high above our heads that we must gaze

skywards in order to see it at all, hovers the great winged solar-disc (sign and symbol of Hor-Behûdti—Horus of Edfu), as though ready to soar into the empyrean. The globe itself was originally of pure, shining gold, and the feathers of the mighty, outstretched wings were of many colours—all the seven colours known to man, and all their gradations "known only to the gods". Passing through this gateway, and following an undeviating line, we traverse the huge, colonnaded forecourt, open to the sky, where ritualistic reliefs are to be seen in great numbers; the two lofty, hypostyle halls; the first and second vestibules, straight to the heart of the temple—the sanctuary, where again the great, winged disc hovers above the Holy of Holies. It is dim and intensely silent here, and it seems easy to evoke the past with its white-robed, officiating priests, though we cannot help wondering how much remained, in these late times, of the spirit of true worship—worship as it had existed in the earliest days. But the deserted sanctuary is not the object of our visit. Slipping through a semi-invisible exit, cut through a solid block of granite, we find ourselves in the long, western ambulatory running between the outer wall of the temple proper, and the girdle-wall which encloses the immense structure. Here it is that the priests of Horus once walked in the cool, violet-tinted twilight hours, at the end of the hot day, while roseate mists from the sacred river crept silently across the plain, bringing life-giving freshness with them; here too, processions, gorgeous temple pageants, used sometimes to pass, and here it is that we can still read the famous legend which is engraved upon the walls—the Battles of Horus against Set. This legend has often been translated[1] but, as is the case with so much that reaches us in this way from ancient Egypt, even when through the medium of the best scholars, the student of Theosophy feels instinctively that the inner meaning of the original text has not been understood, and that the world is given but a very small part of what is really there.

The record of this stupendous struggle is long and rather involved, but in essence it would seem to be both cosmic and individual, as these archaic records usually are; it is the primordial encounter of light with darkness, but it may also be interpreted as an initiation into the Mysteries. Stripped of some of its very confusing details, which are, probably in many cases, late additions, but more often undoubtedly deliberate "blinds", the story, briefly outlined, runs thus.

It was in the days of Ra, Father of Egypt, that Set, the Evil One, who had many ruthless followers, rebelled against the King, hoping, of course, to usurp the throne. Ra, "who was getting old"—by which we may, perhaps, imagine that he was about to withdraw, to return to the Lodge from whence he had come forth—called upon Horus, "his own son", doubtless a candidate for initiation, to engage Set in combat; to destroy his growing, insidious power; to expel him from the kingdom; and Horus arose in haste, rejoicing that his day had come at last. Then Ra, "who was in the southland", set sail down the river to meet the foe, and Horus stood at the prow of the barque calling loudly to his adversaries to come out of hiding, to show themselves, to confront him squarely,

[1] Naville's *Mythe d'Horus*, Budge's *Legends of the Gods*, Wiedemann's *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, etc., etc.

openly. But the hosts of Evil, being cautious and stealthy, hid in secret places, hoping thus to strike from a safe distance and from under cover. Seeing which, and recognizing the craftiness of Set's adherents, Horus searched diligently for them, and wherever he came upon the lurking hordes, he slaughtered them without mercy, or put them to headlong flight. For the recruits of Horus—those who, when called upon, fought at his side and under his guidance—were skilled "armourers";[2] they were those who forge in the fire the weapons of the gods, after the base metal has been separated from the pure, the true ore, while the confederates of Set were like beasts of prey, hideous in form, pitiless, venomous, blood-thirsty. Therefore the warfare that was waged between the opposing forces was inexorable. There follows a long account of the subterfuges of the creatures of the Evil One, for not only do they hide in ambush but, as each new battle is fought, Horus finds that in the interval between every encounter, subtly they have changed their shapes, so that, as they turn upon him again, they are almost unrecognizable; or else, believing them to have been slain, he finds that they have sprung to life, and that they swarm around him, more hostile than ever. So the conflict rages. Horus gives battle and, time and again, he falls upon his enemies, utterly defeating them, but while in each of these engagements he is the victor, he fails to come face to face with Set himself. Set, the arch enemy, the one for whom he is looking, always eludes him, though Horus seeks Set far and wide; and so the real issue remains unsolved. In all this part of the record we are irresistibly reminded of certain passages in *Light on the Path* where, for instance, we read that "the vices reappear in changed aspect in the heart of the disciple"; or "Again and again the battle must be fought and won, it is only for an interval that Nature can be still."

Then, at this point in the legend, we are told that over Horus a great change came—a student of Theosophy would recognize it as a god-like change of consciousness, for he was carried to a great height. Standing on the gleaming prow of the barque of his Father Ra, alert, fully aware of the cunning, the savage cruelty of the enemy which he could not clearly see, fully exposed to their treacherous onslaughts, Horus arose—"he ascended above himself, high into the heavens, so, at last, having the enemy beneath him." At the voice of command of his Father Ra, and assisted by Thoth the Twice-Great, Lord of Wisdom and Magic, he uprose in the form of a resplendent, fiery globe of light, flashing like the sun, with wondrous, glittering wings outspread, and there aloft he hovered. It is evident that the moment of transmutation had come, for he was changed in aspect, transfigured; his face shone with the pure whiteness of the sun, the reflected radiance of his Father, and from his head, fanlike, streamed long shafts of fire, many hued—all the component colours of his now divine nature, blended in that central glory. "Looking down from the height of heaven", he clearly saw where the foe had gathered in greater numbers than ever, and fiercer than ever, but still Set remained invisible, for that crafty one, knowing that Horus, transformed, uplifted, could now see all things on the earth beneath, in his turn was transformed—he changed himself into a monstrous, hissing snake, and in that

[2] Translated by Egyptologists as "blacksmiths", but this gives only the tribal, not the mystical interpretation.

shape escaped underground. So Hor-Behûdti soared in celestial beauty, radiant and free in the heavens above, and Set crawled darkly, vilely in the depths below.

Horus, after his transformation, returns, however, to the scene of action, invincible in his newly acquired power. "Like a devouring flame" he hurls himself upon the foe, and the sound of those great, rushing wings is like that of many waters. The legend, continuing, tells of renewed and swift-recurring battles, for the followers of Set, knowing that their leader was still alive, had taken courage to fight on, though more and more were slain. There is a famous hymn to Hor-Behûdti which was sung by the priests dedicated to his worship, one verse of which alone gives us a glimpse of the Mystery Teaching. "Eat ye the flesh of the vanquished, drink ye his blood, burn ye his bones in the flame of the fire." Egyptologists point to these lines as especially interesting, being, as they declare, a survival from the days when cannibalism was prevalent in Egypt! The student of Theosophy has a very different interpretation, however, and would regard these words as having a deeply occult significance, as hiding esoteric truths, the full import of which could be known only to initiates, though one obvious meaning is that *the life* must be withdrawn from the lower elements in our nature, back into the higher, where it belongs; that the best of the personality must be assimilated by the true Ego or soul.

It is interesting to note that the legend, drawing toward its close, has two different endings. In one case, Horus, after a protracted search, is said at last to have met and killed his age-old enemy, thus finishing the matter for all time. The other version is that the last great battle has not yet been fought, that "it is yet to come", but that when Horus finally meets Set in mortal combat, he will kill him; "The Enemy of Mankind" will be utterly destroyed, and *then*, so this ancient prophecy tells us, the gods will reign on earth again—Ra and Osiris, Horus and Thoth and the other gods will come back; they will live once more among us, as they lived in those holy, far-off days, when Egypt was young.

Horus of Edfu is essentially the great Warrior god of Egypt, and it is significant that above the entrance portals of Egyptian temples is still to be seen the splendour of the winged solar-disc, poised and ready to take its upward flight. This, tradition tells us, was done at the command of Ra himself—Ra who decreed that "in every temple throughout the Two Lands", the winged globe of Egypt, symbol of the radiant and soaring Spirit, enduring emblem of his own son, "the Exalted One, he who has emanated from me", should be placed. It is significant because it would seem to indicate that the ancient Egyptians were saying in their own special way, the selfsame thing that *Light on the Path*, *Through the Gates of Gold*, *Fragments*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *The Bhagavad Gîta*, in fact all of our noblest theosophical books tell us, and also what Madame Blavatsky and every one of our leaders since her time has exemplified—that it is only those having the Warrior Spirit who may hope to enter the Path.

HETEP-EN-NETER.

CYCLES

CYCLES, Cycles, Cycles. Cycles all around us, cycles all the time, cycles everywhere.

When we speak of so-called Theosophical doctrines we often feel that we must present a reason, or a why and wherefore; but the theory of cycles needs no introduction, no recommendation, no presentation.

Religious cults, the scientific world, the professions and arts, are saturated with an unconscious knowledge of the action of cycles. Historians invariably note the peculiarities of cyclic progress; statesmen are compelled to recognize that numerous activities and events are periodic and repetitive. So prevalent and general is the knowledge of cyclic action and cyclic laws, that it is marvellous, almost incredible, that the world should thus virtually accept the doctrine in its manifold ramifications, and yet still continue to ignore it in a fatuous desire for "self-determination", and to act as though there were no such thing as time and history having habits like persons. It would seem that even well informed people actually fear that "the law of cycles" connotes something akin to restriction in liberty of action—an infringment of their "inalienable rights"—and they will not face it consciously, no matter how fundamental it is in all their instinctive attitudes.

If we try to define a "cycle", we are apt to say something like, "the recurrence of similar events after equal periods of time", and to let it go at that. Such a definition is short and simple, but not enough. We can gain little light if we limit a discussion or investigation to a single, artificially isolated cycle, such as, say, the action of the tides, or the relation of eclipses to mundane events, or the annual characteristics of the sun's motion in the heavens. As soon as we begin to deal with the subject of one cycle, we find ourselves entangled in another cycle, and then another and another,—so in many of them, all mutually involved, all proceeding at the same time. As we pursue our investigation, we find that all cyclic action is virtually related to astronomical periods, that there are peculiar and extraordinary numerical features involving septenaries, nines, or multiples of both, which enable us to determine something of the manner in which they are mutually related and involved. Taken in certain combinations, they produce a unified joint effect like a composite picture, to say nothing, yet, of the peculiarities of their epacts, or overlappings.

Here we may pause to reassure those who may be apprehensive about being placed under the control of cyclic action, and of having those sacred personal liberties jeopardized which are so dear to our hearts. Let us remember that we are already under cyclic law. Whether we like it or not, we cannot help ourselves, and any consolation available must be that which is provided by cyclic action and which is not extraneous thereto.

It is quite true that the complicated, inexorable cyclic action of the sun,

planets, moon and stars, exerts a rigid determination of conditions that tend to mould the destinies of races and nations. Very much the same is true of groups and families; and also, as regards individuals, though the tendency is modified in the latter case, by the important fact that the individual possesses a more acute sense of self-conscious personal identity than any group can have, which enables him, not to escape from cyclic action, but to choose his own cycles, to recognize and understand the peculiarities of their action and tendencies, and to place himself under the discipline of one in preference to that of another. The same could be done by a nation if that nation were under the guidance of leaders who both understood cyclic law and worked in harmony with it.

Although I have never heard of cycles being classified in such a way, I would call them, for the sake of convenience, terrestrial or mundane, and astronomical or celestial. Terrestrial cycles—diurnal and annual motion of the earth, lunar cycles, precession of the equinoxes, revolution of the line of the apsides (major axis of the earth's orbit), change in the obliquity of the ecliptic (tilting of the earth's axis), all of which are involved with our calendars, seasons and concatenation of events—are almost all very well known, have been known from time immemorial, and are vitally and intrinsically related to every phase of human progress and development. Celestial cycles pertain to combinations of orbital motions of the planets (and perhaps also to the astroids, collectively), and are known to influence terrestrial life indirectly, and to combine their action with that of mundane cycles. These cycles are generally the foundation of those immensely long periods which concern races and geological changes.

For example, the cycle of the complete tilting of the earth's axis through 360°, requires a period of about 2,160,000 years, and, in combination with celestial cycles, affects not only races and sub-races, but even the contour of continents. Except to students of ancient occult wisdom, it is little known, and has not even been considered by the western world. Most of the other terrestrial cycles, however, have been, and are now, the subject of profound study and investigation.

Consider such a period as 2520 years (twice 1260 years): it involves, or, through septenary analogies, is related to, other cycles of a similar nature, such as 2300 years, 1078 years, 1040 years, 630 years, 315 years, etc. With its epacts, its subdivisions, etc., it has been found to mark off and correspond with important and critical periods in human history. It has been identified by Biblical interpreters with the "seven times", "times, times and a half", "evenings, mornings" (2300 years), etc., and in noting coincidences these interpreters seem generally to think that such cycles are the exclusive property of Christian civilization. Such a cycle is now terminating, and a similar one is about to begin. By applying cyclic theories to this particular time, Grattan Guinness and others were able to predict world-war dates and subsequent events with considerable accuracy.

I referred above to epacts, using that term in a sense similar to that in which it is applied to the sun and the moon. In the course of a year, the sun marks off twelve solar months. That annual period will include twelve lunar months

(from one new moon to the next) with about eleven days over. Thus, if there be a new moon on January 1st of one year, on January 1st of the next year the moon will be eleven days old. The eleven days is an "epact"—the astronomical term used to express the overlapping, or difference in phase, in the cycles of heavenly bodies whose periods are not exact multiples of one another, so that they are in general, but not complete, synchronism. In the course of 315 years the above-mentioned epact almost runs out; 1040 years has been discovered to be a very finely adjusted solar-lunar cycle, in which the position of the sun and moon in the ecliptic and with respect to each other, synchronize with remarkable accuracy, almost devoid of epact. The varying tendencies and forces involved in cycles may largely counterbalance one another when the epacts are large and the difference in phase correspondingly great; but, as the epact shrinks, they may unite in a concerted and intensified effect, until there is a release of pent-up forces that irresistibly sweeps peoples and things out of old familiar circumstances into new expressions and new statements of ancient and eternal truths.

One might pause here to note that a correct understanding of cyclic action supplies a point of view that enables fatalists and predestinarians to hold their faith, and at the same time to reconcile their logic with that of the lovers of "free will". The former are right if they understand that the general aspect and order of life are regulated and determined by this or that series of cycles (whichever are exerting the strongest influence), and the latter are equally consistent in holding they are free to change their habits, as previously established, transfer their allegiances, alter their motives, and bring themselves within the scope and action of cycles which are in consonance with superior aspirations.

In 1878, Dr. Grattan Guinness published his work on the *Approaching End of the Age*, which contained virtually all of the then known exoteric cycles with their epacts and correspondences with mundane events. It was very complete, thorough and enlightening. Unfortunately (and particularly so as it was obviously inconsistent and not necessary to his purpose), he devoted a vast amount of space to abusing the Church of Rome, which prevented a valuable work from receiving the attention and popularity it would otherwise have deserved. From 1920 to about 1928 Davidson and Aldersmith, in their work on *The Great Pyramid*, virtually confirmed Dr. Guinness's forecasts and brought them up to date, so far as exoteric, material investigation would permit. The Biblical interpreters have, to a limited extent, correctly applied the rule of proportionality, adding or subtracting ciphers (multiplying or dividing by ten or by one hundred, etc.). However, in seeking for historical dates from which to count, say 2500 years, or 2595 years or 2300 years, it is noteworthy that they invariably fix on such starting points as 457 B. C. or 485 B. C. or 600 B. C., reached by a study of the records of ancient eclipses (Ptolemy's records for example), and ignore the fact that the rule of proportionality also applies regarding those dates, which, for all they know, might have been counted from similar eclipses or astronomical phenomena at an earlier cyclic period, say 1040 years

or 1260 years before. The exoteric interpreters are prone to manipulate their cycles with extraordinary freedom and latitude when they wish them to agree with some *a priori* assumption, and then to reverse their logic and attempt to clinch the same argument, by being very specific and inflexible as to their dates.

Most truly the sun and stars shine on all people, nations and races, east and west, north and south, and cycles, exerting their unmistakable influence on mundane events and chronology, roll right round the world with absolute impartiality. When men with otherwise practical, level-headed and learned minds, propound the theory that numerous significant measurements incorporated in the structure of the Great Pyramid, which they admit was built at least 4000 B. C. (I believe anywhere from 70,000 to 143,000 years ago), bear exclusive and immediate reference to outer events now transpiring, and to no others in the past or future, and try to establish such a preposterous proposition by repeated checking and re-checking, it is time that someone contradicted them. As long as western speculation and intuitive research are exclusively directed by the blinding and deadening effects of materialistic cycles, *now running out*, our scholars will not be able to apprehend the true nature of the spiritual and psychic forces involved in cyclic action.

Every one of the great and small cycles permits of an expression, an objectification, of a phase of spiritual life peculiar to its own time-period. Each provides numerous opportunities for the achievement and practice of that peculiar expression. Each also provides a force and energy which flow most easily and directly toward the fulfilment of the purposes favoured by, and implicit in, its own particular time. It would therefore appear to be the obvious duty of any religion or cult charged with the guidance of men, to seek and to instil a proper understanding and regard for the trend of the prevailing cycles, so that there may be a wise and effective use and application of the opportunities and forces available.

There is an inferential bargain between the Logos and mankind, with regard to all gifts of the spirit. If they are rightly used, they are beneficial,—a good bargain is beneficial to both sides. But if man misuses the gifts of the Logos, the misuse reacts upon himself. Nowhere is this more true than in the use of time, and of the cycles of time. In the happy event of its right use, the end of a great cycle finds men with valuable, stored-up powers and tendencies that carry them smoothly and easily into the superior and more favourable series of opportunities of new cyclic events. On the other hand, if the life of the time periods is punctuated with blind, wilful ignorance, and the sacrifice of energy and opportunity to wasteful, competitive cross-purposes, the end of such "times" will invariably be charged with a hateful accumulation of pent-up animosities and conflicts that can only terminate in a violent crisis and upheaval.

If we cannot see or comprehend the working of involved occult laws, of which cyclic action is only an objective analogy, we may be able to take a little of the mystery out of them by a simple illustration. Suppose that we were given the task of discarding the present humanity *in toto*, and starting a new and better one (a rather large order). We begin with our new men, organized to live by new

methods, and immediately discover that this novel humanity is very much influenced by the diurnal cycle—of night and day. Soon we learn that we can mark time and events in longer subdivisions with the moon; to which there are compulsorily added the seasonal effects, and the changes in them caused by the precession of the equinoxes, and the tilting of the axis of the earth, and so on and on. As the men of to-day have morning and evening habits, and live differently in summer and in winter, so, though their habits might be very different from ours, it is clear that after thousands and thousands of years, the men of the new race would become irresistibly impressed by the material effect of many, many repetitions, which would ultimately compel compliance. The occult and magnetic influence of terrestrial and celestial cycles is identically analogous to the objective, material effect. Instead of being puzzled and mystified by the influence of cyclic action, we could hardly expect this action to be absent, or unrecognized, or ignored.

We may illustrate this from another point of view. Let us think of a flower, which we bring before us in imagination. We marvel at its beauty, are pleased with its delicate fragrance, and are charmed by its wonderful colour contrasts and combinations; we are awed by the subtile and glorious self-sufficiency with which it worships God and interprets to us the silent purity of the spiritual world. If we ask the naturalist and seer what they think of it, they may confirm our reactions, adding to them an explanation of the symmetry and geometry involved in the flower's form, and the movement of the life-force that compels it to give its unique expression to its own secret motive, in a time-cycle of growth and decay. Human life and the phenomena of manifestation are identically similar. There is a hidden occult motive, involved in a form-pattern, stimulated to seek objectivization by a force-pattern, through the co-ordination and regulation of a time-pattern,—cyclic law.

We live in a period exceptional for important cyclic changes. Some of these changes began before our dates, and others will extend to well past the year 2000 A. D.; but at present there is a concentration of intense cyclic action which would be even greater were it not that the epacts involved make the terminations and beginnings cover years, instead of months or days. Some of the above mentioned cycles synchronize with the dates of the French and American Revolutions. Several different cycles, of particular interest to Hebrews, ended about 1844. We always say "about", because the same periods of time may be counted from different dates; and, of course, any change in the beginning of a cycle means a change in the end, so that different starting points give different sequences of notable events. The first 5000 years of the anciently known 25,000 year cycle (part of the Hindu *Kali Yuga*, or Dark Age,—which does not mean "nocturnal zodiacal signs", as stated by one authority) ended about 1900. The well known short cycles of 2520 years and 2595 years (namely 2520 years plus an epact of 75 years), close between 1917 and 1933. Others extend into the twenty-first century. Within this current period of 150 to 200 years, there is occurring the constant repetition of smaller cycles of 33, 49 and 77 years, with their several epacts. Approximate coincidences of such kinds cause the release of cumulative

bad Karma, accompanied by wars, industrial and social upheavals, and obvious loss of control on the part of the generally recognized authorities. This last is natural because it is extremely difficult for those trained and hardened in an old order of things, to re-orient their point of view to rapid and perhaps violent change.

The present is what we may call "wide open". We are neither here nor there, it is everything and anything. We observe statesmen, theologians, financiers and soldiers, in total ignorance and disregard of the cyclic forces, struggling desperately and futilely to rectify a very bad situation. Still worse, we see them with the most sincere and disinterested intentions, going straight against the "times". Nor do they know that, as the new cycles come into operation, as men begin to feel the characteristics of new conditions, and as new opportunities are exposed, affairs will gradually right themselves, the world will forget the present chaos, and will settle down to head directly for the next one. Almost daily examples are presented of the loosening of the old, familiar disciplines, and of the unrecognized approach of ancient things disguised in new and strange ways.

There is much that might be said about cycles and the world war, but we shall not enter upon that here, more than to comment on a rather generally prevailing error of attitude as regards great catastrophes. There seems to be a mistaken belief, entertained by many earnest and pious people, in one form or another, that the heavenly powers sit on high with a large stock of misfortune and bad luck, which they release on mankind when they are angry with us and wish to "pour out the vials" of their wrath. This ingrained notion has weighed heavily on the Christian world for generations, and is not absent from other exoteric religions; but it is very far from the truth. The powers that guide our destiny have never lost their tempers and hurled wars, misfortunes, earthquakes on us to punish us for recalcitrancy. On the contrary, knowing well from the records of human experience, records more ancient and more complete than any in all our archives, the probabilities of dereliction and misconduct, from the very beginning of any important cyclic period they pour into the stream of life a continual, never-ceasing spiritual current of admonition, enlightenment, warning, coaxing and pleading. Again and again, they instigate efforts to revive the religious forces and beliefs that the world needs, but which it permits to dry up from neglect. Beginning at the beginning of a "time", and persisting without lapse throughout the generations up to the last minute of the last hour, they give, from the bottom of their hearts, from the depths of their unfathomable compassion and charity, their blessing, their love, their teaching, their protection. But when the time draws to a close, when the cycles run out and new ones become incipient, they may, they do, they must, call on humanity for an accounting of the vast wealth of spiritual force and energy that has been given, or loaned, that the work of the spirit should be done as only they know it must be done. When the cycle comes to its end, there must be some recovery, some squaring of moral accounts, lest the force which has been misappropriated, misapplied and bound up in selfishness and evil, be carried over into the new

cycle, and, by repetition and practice along old lines of well established faults and wrongs, become set, hardened and fixed so as to make the work in the new cycle doubly and trebly difficult. For the very salvation of mankind, and not for punishment, least of all to "pour out vials of wrath", must there be a shaking up, a separation of the good from the evil, a re-assortment of occult values and resources to bring about a better, a safer and a clearer start. If the world war was an appalling catastrophe of great magnitude, we must remember that such an eventuality was anticipated by Christ twenty centuries ago, and by the Great Lodge of Masters for an immensely greater period. Every effort had been made by them for scores of generations to forestall its occurrence, while all the modern pacifists were still in Limbo. Nor need we ignore the fact that the horrors, costs and consequences (do we know the consequences?) are a measure of the tremendous amount of misapplied energy and effort loaned to the world by the Lodge in the last 2595 years, and captured by the forces of evil, who are now, through their unconscious agents, whining about peace and international good will, in order that they may retain as long as possible those things which are not theirs, and which must ultimately be returned to their rightful owners. If those restitutions cannot be made without a struggle, they will be made with one.

Let us bring this home to ourselves. Are our personal lives, our so-called "three score years and ten", any different, in essence, from other cycles? Should we be called upon to render up our bodies, submit to a purging of our minds and motives, for any other purpose than that of casting out those things that must not endure, and for the release of those elemental forces which have not been gathered into and permanently identified with our immortal souls? When we begin again with a "clean slate", we should at least have harvested for our permanent individualities some values from the past life, so that the series of those lives may represent a mounting spiral of attainment, a constant crescendo, and not a mere repetition of the same old acts and experiences, neither better nor worse.

There are good cycles and bad cycles, just as there are good men and bad men, and the good and bad are mixed. So we can discern, discriminate and differentiate.

R.

Life is made, not to be lived, but to be conquered.—RÉNÉ BAZIN.

CHARLES THE TWELFTH OF SWEDEN

La guerre est aux hommes ce que l'eau dormante est aux cygnes: le lieu de leur beauté.—RENÉ QUINTON.

THE sign on the outside of the Motion Picture Theatre said, "Charles the Twelfth, Historical Picture", and being interested in history, we went in. What a marvellous instrument of Art the motion picture might be and so seldom is! This picture of "Charles the Twelfth" was made under the auspices of the Swedish Government and not by Hollywood. We went to see it many times and each time we were stirred, not with that psychic excitement of the "Thriller", but with that deep emotion which great art, great heroism and the simplicity of reality arouse.

Voltaire says of Charles the Twelfth: "He was perhaps the most extraordinary man that ever was on earth, who united in himself all the great qualities of his ancestors and who had no other fault nor other misfortune than to have carried them all too far." Doubtless, Charles made many grave mistakes, but he always conducted himself with an unfailing adherence to his sense of honour and with unflinching heroism. The magnificent fortitude of his soldiers and of the Swedish people fill us with admiration, and present an object-lesson in qualities sadly lacking to-day. It is well to remember the heroic lives and noble sacrifices of the past, and to be instructed and inspired by them.

There are few books about Charles the Twelfth to be found in English. However, Voltaire's famous *Histoire de Charles Douze*, and *The Charles Men* of Verner von Heidenstam, have been translated. Voltaire's life is a model of admirably written history, and *The Charles Men* is a beautiful book, though the English translation is wretched.

Charles the Twelfth was born on the seventh of June, 1682. As a child, Charles was gentle enough, but obstinate. "With the word Glory one could obtain anything of him." He was interested in mathematics and was an excellent Latin scholar. At the same time he delighted in violent exercise and horsemanship. He read Quintus Curtius and desired to emulate Alexander the Great. He came to the throne while still very young. His father, Charles the Eleventh, died when the son was fifteen, but the Council of Regency and the States General declared him capable of reigning at once.

The life of Charles the Twelfth bears certain extraordinary resemblances to the life of Napoleon, almost as if it had been a preliminary sketch, executed in the North, amid another race, to be sure, but very interesting to observe. When the Archbishop of Upsala, having anointed him, put out his hands to take the crown, Charles seized it and placed it on his own head. Napoleon, it will be

remembered, also crowned himself, perhaps remembering Charlemagne who was a little too slow and made the mistake of allowing the Pope to make him Emperor.

The first acts of Charles were of no great importance. He gave his confidence to the Councillor Piper, who was to follow him through so many adventures, and who died at last of starvation, a prisoner in Russia, refusing to be ransomed and remaining with his countrymen in captivity. "Oh God, Thy course has been so directed, that this man has been chosen as one of the many martyrs of our people. Saved, honoured be his injured name!"

The King was hunting bear when a message was brought, telling him that the King of Denmark, the Elector Augustus of Saxony, King of Poland, and Peter the Great of Russia, had all declared war on him. It was then, standing in the forest, with his foot upon a dead bear, that he awakened to his destiny. He turned from sports and idle pastimes and rushed to war. His Councillors were alarmed at the idea of facing so many powers under a King still almost a child. "Gentlemen", said the King, "I have resolved never to make an unjust war, but never to end a just one save by the death of my enemies. I shall attack the first one who declares himself, and when I have conquered him, I hope to frighten the others."

It was at this time that the King adopted that austerity of conduct which he continued all his life. He ate little, he drank no wine, he dressed as a simple soldier, and he never married. In the hours of their greatest poverty and destitution, the Swedes knew that their King ate black bread and slept upon the ground. He heard prayers twice every day, at seven in the morning and at four in the afternoon, and it should be noted that even Voltaire remarks that such an example of piety always impresses men when they see that it is without hypocrisy. His soldiers were under a discipline extraordinary in those times. They paid for what they took.

The King left his capital, Stockholm, in May, 1700, and never returned to it. With him went Count Piper and General Renschild. His fleet blockaded Copenhagen, and the King also attacked it by land. So eager was he to begin the battle, that he leaped from the boat and waded ashore. It was the first time he had heard musket-fire. He took Copenhagen, imposed terms on the Danes, and ended the campaign in six weeks. Augustus of Saxony now raised the siege of Riga and withdrew, leaving only Peter at war with Charles. Peter had three ambassadors in Stockholm swearing inviolable peace, but he had started a war, giving as a reason that he had received no honours when he passed through Riga incognito, and that his ambassadors had been overcharged for provisions "These were the grievances for which he ravaged Ingria with eighty thousand men." Peter at this time was still almost a savage, and his army was composed of even worse barbarians. The only discipline was his will, which he enforced with cruelty. He overate, he drank, there were women in his tent. He was indifferent to suffering and subject to fits of homicidal violence.

In the picture, we see Peter before Narva, with his camp, his fortifications, his bastions, his trenches and his hordes of Russians. In the small citadel of Narva, Baron de Hoorn has only a thousand regular soldiers, yet he holds out.

The burghers tell him of their sufferings; they are starving; they are freezing. He replies that the Swedes do not surrender. Then, suddenly, they hear in the distance the cannon of the King who has crossed the sea to relieve them. They burst into tears of joy.

Peter had eighty thousand men in his camp. Not satisfied, he had sent for thirty thousand more. Leaving the camp, he set out to join them, hoping to crush the Swedes between two armies. The King of Sweden had landed with sixteen thousand foot-soldiers and about four thousand cavalry. He advanced rapidly with only eight thousand of his men, attacked the advance posts, put them to flight, and in two days stood before Narva.

Now we see drawn up upon the hill the line of Swedish cavalry. The great banners with the three crowns of Sweden, and the banners with the monogram of Charles, are flying in the wind. The King on his horse before the lines, looks towards Narva. A boy brings a bucket of water for the horse, which drinks. Then the King lifts the bucket and drinks too, offering it to a general who makes a face and declines. The infantry march past, with their neat uniforms, their muskets, their banners. The cannon are dragged up, very small cannon with piles of round balls. The cannon are fired and the Russian guns reply. The soldiers charge across the fields. Cannon balls fall and the turf flies up. The King charges at the head of his cavalry and his horse is killed under him. The snow falls heavily and men are seen dimly; swords flash, banners fall and are retaken, men die and are trodden upon. The Swedes struggle up the sides of the redoubts. The barricades are forced. The Russians flee in disorder.

Peter, when he heard of the defeat, said: "I know that the Swedes will beat us for a long time, but, finally, they will themselves teach us how to fight."

Augustus of Saxony, King of Poland, now renewed his alliance with Peter. Charles, after several brilliant victories, marched into Lithuania. Augustus had been elected King over two other candidates, the Prince de Conti and Prince Sobiesky, and he had a great deal of trouble maintaining his position. He decided to make terms with Charles, and sent the Countess of Kōnigsmark to see him. This Countess of Kōnigsmark was the mother of Maurice de Saxe who won the victory of Fontenoy for Louis the Fifteenth. Charles refused to see her. She resolved to meet him when he rode out alone, as he often did. In the picture we see her driving in her charming little carriage onto a narrow bridge. She gets out and stands in the road, looking as fascinating as possible. Charles arrives. Her coach horses rear and plunge, and she bars the way. "Oh Equal of Alexander", she addresses him, but Charles, raising his hat to her, turns his horse, spurs it down the bank and swims the river.

Charles defeated Augustus at Clissau and entered Cracow unresisted. Augustus withdrew into the city of Thorn, where Charles proceeded to besiege him. It was before Thorn that General Lieven was killed. Charles always wore a simple uniform. Seeing Lieven in a conspicuous blue uniform laced with gold, he feared the General might be mistaken for him by the enemy. He seized him by the arm and forced him to stand behind him, covering him with his own body, but at that moment a cannon shot killed the General. Voltaire says: "The

death of this man, killed instead of himself, and because he wished to save him, contributed no little to establish in him the opinion, which he held all his life, of absolute predestination, and convinced him that his fate, which preserved him so singularly, reserved him for the execution of great things."

All the north of Europe was in consternation. The Councillors of Charles advised him to take the crown of Poland for himself, but he refused it. It was then given to his friend, Stanislas Leczinski. Charles crossed Silesia and entered Saxony. Before him the people fled in every direction, but he proclaimed that he had come only to bring peace, and that those inhabitants who returned and paid his levies, would be treated as his own subjects. As Charles was known always to keep his word, the inhabitants returned. He camped near Lützen, the battle field famous for the victory and death of his ancestor, Gustavus Adolphus. "I have tried", he said, "to live like him. God will, perhaps, grant me one day a death as glorious."

Charles imposed terms on Augustus and forced the Emperor to sign a treaty which protected the Protestants in Silesia. At this time he received ambassadors from all the courts of Europe, among them, the Duke of Marlborough, who hoped to gain his aid. However, Charles' great desire was to conquer Russia. He now hastened towards Grodno, where Peter was. At the news that the Swedes were arriving, Peter fled out of the North Gate as Charles entered the South Gate. Charles had only six hundred men. The Tzar fled with two thousand. Then, hearing of the small number of the Swedish force, he sent back fifteen hundred. Thirty Swedes, who were on guard at the gate, held off these fifteen hundred men until the rest of the soldiers in the city came up, when the Russians were completely routed.

Charles, in a series of magnificent battles, defeated the Russians on the Beresina, and then crossed the Dnieper. He was now on the high road to Moscow. His advisers begged him to wait for General Levenhaupt who was bringing up reinforcements. Much to the astonishment of everyone, instead of waiting, and going on to Moscow, Charles turned south and marched towards the Ukraine. Napoleon severely criticizes Charles' conduct at this point, saying that up to then all his actions had been according to the rules of military science, and his communications secure, but by this movement he exposed his flank to Russia and was unable to receive reinforcements.

The Ukraine was in revolt against Peter. The chief Hetman was that Mazeppa of whose adventures Byron has written. He allied himself secretly with Charles, and promised to meet him on the Desna with thirty thousand men, well supplied with munitions and provisions. After a twelve days' march through forests and swamps where most of the artillery and wagons were lost, Charles' army arrived exhausted and hungry at the Desna, where they found a body of Muscovite soldiers whom they had to defeat. At last, Charles joined Mazeppa,—whose entire army had been destroyed by the Russians. Mazeppa had barely escaped with six thousand men and some horses. Charles counted upon the fifteen thousand men of Levenhaupt and his munitions, but Levenhaupt arrived with five thousand men and nothing else, having fought off the armies of Peter for

three days, inflicting on them tremendous losses indeed, but losing all his convoys. Thus, Charles found himself without provisions, surrounded by enemies, in the terrible cold of the winter.

His march through the Ukraine reminds us of the retreat from Moscow. His men were without shoes, uniforms or horses. They were obliged to abandon their cannon. They lacked food. In the picture, we see them struggling through the deep snows. Men fall, are dragged along by their companions, or are left to die. The King is camped in the forest, the men are gathered around the fires, when a rider gallops up and falls from his horse. Two thousand men are lost, frozen to death! Charles and one of his Generals ride out to look for them, and find them, some buried in the snow, others frozen stiff where they stand. Charles goes from one to another. What thoughts are in his mind? What feeling in his heart? What implacable destiny drives him on? He kneels upon the snow, alone, surrounded by the dead, and prays.

At last the winter ended and Charles camped before Poltava. Sir Edward Creasy, writing in 1852, gives Poltava as one of the fifteen decisive battles of Western history. It was there that the great power of Sweden ended, and Russia rose upon its ruins. Sweden ruled over Finland, Ingria, Livonia, Esthonia, Carelia, Pomerania, Rügen and Bremen, and dictated the policies of Poland. Had she been victorious over Russia, the subsequent destiny of Europe would have been completely changed. Upon what Karma do these momentous events rest? What cycles accompany their rise and decline? If Saturn in his fall shone balefully upon the turning tide of Napoleon's fortunes, what planets rose or set at Poltava?

To take Poltava would open to Charles the road to Moscow, and put an end to the misery of his army which, shot to pieces, lacking everything, consisted of eighteen thousand Swedes and about six thousand Cossacks and Valachians. But it was at Poltava that Charles perceived that the Swedes had taught Tzar Peter the art of war.

On the seventh of June, his birthday, Charles was victorious in a skirmish with the advance guard of Peter's army, but as he was returning to camp, he was shot in the heel. He showed no signs of it and remained on horseback for six hours. At last the pain overcame him and he had to be lifted from his horse. The surgeons decided to amputate his leg—surgeons were the same then as now—but one of them insisted he could save it by making deep incisions. The King himself held his leg with both hands and watched the operation.

Now the whole Russian army was advancing upon him. Charles, wounded and unable to act, found himself between the Dnieper and a smaller river, in a desert country, without forts, without munitions. Peter, with sixty thousand men in good condition and well provided with ammunition, had fortified his position with redoubts lined with artillery.

On the morning of July eighth, Charles, borne in a litter through the ranks, attacked the Tzar. Creasy says: "The Swedes never showed their ancient valour more nobly than on that dreadful day." The battle began with a cavalry charge. The Muscovite squadrons broke. The Tzar's hat was pierced by a bullet. The

victory of the Swedes seemed sure. But if Grouchy was five minutes late at Waterloo, General Creutz with five thousand dragoons got lost at Poltava and failed to come up on the Russian flank. The Tzar rallied his cavalry and fell on the unsupported Swedes. The King with Renschild rallied his troops and the two armies joined in battle on the plain.

We see the great lines of the Russians marching, no longer in disorder as at Narva, but disciplined and steady. We see the furious charges of the cavalry, the *mêlée* of men and horses, the sabres flashing, the bursting shots, the smoke of battle. Three times the litter of Charles is shattered. The Swedes break and fly. Charles raises himself on the wreck of the litter, waving his sword and crying, "Swedes! Swedes!" The fleeing soldiers turn back; but, at last, overwhelmed, they give way. The Prince of Württemberg, Field Marshal Renschild, Count Piper, are taken prisoner. Peter is said to have exclaimed: "The Son of the Morning has fallen from heaven, and the foundations of St. Petersburg at length stand firm."

Charles refused to fly and could not defend himself. Poniatowsky had him set on a horse, gathered together five hundred men, and, cutting a way through ten Russian regiments, they finally joined the remains of the army under Levenhaupt, fleeing to the Dnieper. The Swedes received with joy their King whom they had thought dead, but Charles was not himself through weakness and fever. He was carried across the river by Poniatowsky and Mazeppa. About three hundred men succeeded in crossing with him, but the rest, pursued by the Russians, were forced to surrender. In *The Charles Men*, when Creutz and Levenhaupt part from the King, Levenhaupt says: "The wreath he twined for himself slid off upon his subjects instead. It will lie for ever on the forgotten graves up there in the marshes. So we must thank him for all he has made of us."

Charles, at Narva, had returned the captured Russian officers. The Swedes taken at Poltava were made slaves. Later, Peter, returning to Moscow, marched through the streets with the banners, the wagons, the wrecked litter of Charles, and the captured Generals, Piper, Renschild, Levenhaupt, Stakelberg, Slipenback, as in a Roman Triumph.

After a five days' march through a desert under the July sun, Charles and the remains of his army crossed the Turkish border. The Sultan received him with honours and allowed him to live at Bender with all of his soldiers. When the Swedes learned that their King was a prisoner in Turkey, they came from the remotest provinces to volunteer to rescue him. In *The Charles Men*, at the Council, Wrede says: "When God sets on us the crown of thorns, that man is not greatest who most conveniently puts it off, but he who himself presses it on all the tighter and says: 'Father, here stand I to serve Thee.' And I say to you that never, never amid the victory banners in former years has our little people come nearer to imperishable greatness than to-day."

Meanwhile, Augustus took back Poland, and the Tzar carried on his conquests of the Swedish provinces. The Danes attacked Sweden and were repulsed. Louis XIV was at war with Austria; all Europe was in arms. Had the French been able to agree and to join forces with the Swedes, there might have been

no Austria, no Prussia, no Russia, and no Germany and, perhaps, as the song in *The Mikado* says: "They never would be missed."

Charles, assisted by the faithful Poniatowsky, endeavoured to persuade the Sultan to make war on Russia, and finally succeeded. At one moment, at the Pruth, the Tzar and his armies were at the mercy of the Turks, but Peter's wife, Catherine, hastily bribed the Vizier with her jewels, and he made peace. Charles, swimming the Pruth on horseback, arrived just too late, and found the Russians withdrawing and all his hopes of victory cheated. The intrigues of the Viziers and Pashas of the Sublime Porte were innumerable and too complicated to relate. Finally, the Sultan ordered Charles to leave for Sweden, but he, certain that his enemies would take him as he passed through Poland, refused to go. He was besieged by the Turkish army in his house at Bender. His resistance was magnificent but hopeless. He was overwhelmed, and sent with all his men to be detained at Demotica. Stanislas Leczinsky, driven out of Poland, had fought for Charles in Pomerania. Now he determined to join him, and, passing through or evading all the armies of his enemies, arrived in Turkey where he too was made prisoner. Charles remained at Demotica a year, inactive and forgotten. All Europe believed him dead. The Council of Regency begged his sister to be Regent. When he heard this, Charles decided at last to leave, and started out with his men, his baggage, and a number of his creditors whom he proposed to pay in Sweden. This slow mode of travel did not suit him. At the Turkish border he told his suite to join him at Stralsund, and, with one officer, he started to cover the immense distance between Turkey and the Baltic. He put on a black wig, a gold laced hat and a blue coat, called himself by a German name, and used the Post horses.

In the picture, we see the two horsemen crossing the Carpathians, riding over the great plains of Hungary, passing through Austria, Bavaria, Westphalia, Mecklenburg. After sixteen days they reached the gates of Stralsund. It is after midnight and the gates are closed. "A courier from the King of Sweden." The sentinel flashes his lantern upon them, the gates are opened and they are taken to the Governor. Half asleep, the Governor asks for news of the King. "What!" says Charles, "Have my faithful servants forgotten me?" Druker falls on his knees and weeps for joy. Charles had neither linen nor uniforms. His legs were so swollen with fatigue that his boots had to be cut off. After a few hours sleep, he went out to review the troops and to inspect the fortifications.

Europe was in a very different state from what it was when Charles had left it in 1709. Peace had been made between France and England. Philip the Fourth was King of Spain. George, Elector of Hanover, was King of England. The King of Denmark had taken Holstein. Frederick of Prussia had captured Pomerania and Stettin. George had taken Verden and Bremen. As for the Tzar, he held Riga, Livonia, Ingria, Carelia, Finland and the Aland Islands. Sweden had lost its provinces, had no commerce, no money, no credit. Its old soldiers had died in battle. More than a hundred thousand were slaves in Russia, or had been sold to the Turks and Tartars. Yet, when the news of Charles' return was known, the young peasants came in crowds to enlist.

The Kings of Denmark and Prussia besieged Stralsund. During the siege, Charles went over to Rügen, which was extremely important strategically to the Swedes. The Prince of Anhalt had landed there with twelve thousand men. Charles with about two thousand, attacked his camp by night. The battle in the storm and darkness, was frightful. Grothusen, who had fought beside the King at Bender, and Dardoff and During were killed before his eyes. Charles himself was wounded in the chest, but Poniatowsky was able to get him onto a horse and to save his life once more.

By the treachery of a soldier, and under the overwhelming number of opposing forces, Stralsund fell. The King escaped with ten men in a fishing boat, and after passing the enemy fleet and the guns of Rügen, where two men were killed and the mast carried away, he came up with two of his own ships which carried him to Carlscroon in Sweden.

Charles, returned after so many years, so many glorious victories, so many disastrous defeats, did not go to Stockholm. From Carlscroon he called for more soldiers. There were villages where there were no men left. Taxes were put on everything, silk garments, gold sword hilts, wigs. All the iron implements were seized. Baron de Görtz, the King's new Councillor, debased the currency. But the public danger made the Swedes forget their individual misery. They expected to see the Russians, the Danes, the Saxons and the English invade Sweden at any moment. At this juncture, much to the surprise of the world, Charles marched into Norway. Voltaire says: "Since Hannibal there had not been seen a General who, unable to maintain himself at home against his enemies, had gone to war upon them in the heart of their states."

Now, most surprising changes in European policy took place. Under the Regent of France, the Duc d'Orléans, France favoured Prussia and England. The allies of Peter began to find him too ambitious, and he found them unsympathetic. Görtz persuaded him not to attack the Swedes and, before long, Europe would have witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of Charles and Peter allied to place James Stuart on the throne of England, and Stanislas on the throne of Poland. Voltaire says: "There are many examples of states conquered by one power. There are few of a great empire conquered by several allies; if their united forces overcome it, their dissensions raise it up again."

Charles was now in Norway, before the fort of Fredrikshall. It was so cold that digging the trenches was like mining rock, but the soldiers, seeing that Charles slept on the ground wrapped only in his cloak, were ashamed to complain. On the eleventh of December, 1718, St. Andrew's Day, the King washed the grime from his face and, for some unknown reason, he, who always wore the same old clothes, put on new clothes of blue broadcloth and new gloves. Field Marshal Mörner gave him some letters from malcontents who threatened his life. He threw them in the fire. "Tell me on how many men may I depend, not in an engagement, but if things go against us?" "On none," replied Mörner. He then went to prayers. The text for the day was Our Lord's Entry into Jerusalem.

At nine that night, the King went to visit the trenches. He stopped, and

kneeling on the bank with his elbows on the parapet, looked at the soldiers working on the trenches. Near him were two Frenchmen, Siguier, his aide-de-camp, who had been with him in Turkey, and Megret, his engineer. Behind them were two or three officers. Charles leaned on the parapet, his face lit up now and then by the glare of the enemy fire, which was not heavy at that hour. Suddenly they saw the King sink down with a sigh. He was dead. A ball had struck him in the right temple. Even as he died, he had grasped the hilt of his sword.

The siege of Fredrikshall was raised. The body of Charles was borne on a litter by his soldiers, slowly through the snow across the provinces of Sweden. As they went, the people came silently to gaze at their dead King, and to weep as he passed. He was buried in the Riddarholm church. "No one wept and no one threatened. All the Swedes divined that thousands of years would gaze back at that night. They felt that now they buried half of their own being." In the chapter called "A Hero's Funeral", at the end of *The Charles Men*, there is a conversation: " 'Never did I hear a tolling that affected me so. There is pleading joy in every tone, as it were for a coronation. And perhaps it is. Does he not return to his capital to-night after eighteen years? Isn't it the expected, the longed-for triumphal march?'

" 'And the victory?'

" 'The steadfastness of his will conquered on the night at Fredrikshall when God struck him dead.'

" 'That steadfastness he turned as a scourge against us.'

" 'Are not your eyes opened yet, so as to see that it was our own secret will and desire which he preserved against our own indecision, like a banner against a rebellious guard?'

"It no longer seemed to Brother George that he followed to the grave a solitary and deserted man. He discerned that, when the hero lay fallen and the duel was ended, they who had suffered worst beneath his inflexibility, lifted him up on their arms." And again: "May we celebrate his memory with torches on stormy winter nights! Where have I seen an epitaph as great as that which our beaten folk is now inscribing over him: He did not make us fortunate and yet we weep for him as for no other."

At the end of the book, the old Charles Man says: "Where, indeed, are the old battalions with Grothusen's drum and the banners of Turkish silk? And he who held us together in the great strife, and never would believe the sign that God had forsaken us, he in whose heroic nature all our yearning was concealed, —where does he dwell? Ask the children that sing. Alas, they go hence one by one, the old brothers in arms. Wherever we fare through the country, walking or by post-chaise, we shall recognize in the mists of night the small white churches where eight or ten strong sons have laid the slabs above their graves. And where does there blossom in an alien land a field so remote that we may not sit down on the sward and whisper: 'Is this perchance the place where one of ours, one who fought and bled, is slumbering?' In their poor garments they lingered a while before us by the bivouac fire, and then went away and fell. Such they were.

So I recall them. So, too, they live in memory and say amid a grateful land: 'Beloved be the people that in the decline of their greatness made their poverty revered before the world.' "

On the battlefield at nightfall, where the plain was strewn with the dead and dying, Napoleon, gazing over it, exclaimed: "I did not know it was so beautiful." This is precisely the fact which the spectacle of the life of Charles the Twelfth and his soldiers has brought home to us. When a man dies in battle for an ideal, for his country, he affirms his faith in immortality. The true nature of man *is* immortal. What if the body die? The soul shall live. At the moment of renunciation the heart knows that its love can surmount all obstacles. At the hour of failure the Higher Self appears in its glory.

Alas, immersed in illusion, men forget their true nature and cling to temporary manifestations and transitory pleasures. That is why—and it must be a sorrow to the gods—sorrow, suffering and war are essential to man's salvation. Only before the inescapable stark fact will he face the truth. Only when he must lay down his life and abandon all, will he seize immortality. The soldier's willingness to endure, to suffer, to die, becomes an act of beauty and a monument to the Eternal. When we read of legions of bowmen fighting in the sky, of hosts that appear in the heavens above earthly battles, let us not mistake it for a superstitious legend. The living Will continues to fight in celestial legions. Not in vain is the alien earth of Russia enriched by the Swedish dead and by the French who fell in the retreat from Moscow. What armies can ever pass the great grave mound of Verdun? "Thy saints, in all this glorious war, shall conquer though they die."

The life of Charles the Twelfth appears as a failure only to those who look upon the surface. He maintained to the end an invincible spirit in the face of all disasters. The heroic qualities put into an act are more important than success. We might well as a nation, as a people, if we be a people, meditate upon these things. The fortitude with which a nation faces disaster counts for more than its prosperity. Courage, endurance, a sense of honour are the glory of a race. Even though they lead through poverty, suffering and defeat, ultimately they end in the power and knowledge of the Immortal Soul.

SAUVAGE.

Fame is vapour, popularity an accident, riches take wings; those who cheer to-day will curse to-morrow, only one thing endures—character.—GREELEY.

RICHNESS OF LIFE

RIGHT SELF-IDENTIFICATION

EVERYONE desires richness of life and, in one way or another, seeks it. As it is also the Divine plan for man and the purpose of his evolution, the only reason why he does not gain it, is that he persists, and has persisted for thousands of lives past, in looking for it in the wrong place. The trouble lies in an error fundamental in our thought—the instinctive assumption that we feel that which affects our own personality most acutely.

Man desires to feel acutely, hence he gives his thought, attention and desire to his personality, seeking agreeable, vivid sensations for it. It likes to be admired or envied, so he strives to exalt it above the personalities of others. It seeks power, or to gratify its love of comfort or of excitement, and he hurries to satisfy its whim. Yet the falsity of the fundamental proposition on which this activity is based, is within the experience of us all. The fact is that we feel most intensely, not necessarily what affects our personalities, but what affects that to which we have given the most of our interest, attention and desire.

The recipient of the major part of our interest has, it is true, too often been ourselves, but it need not be, as a mother's love constantly proves. Anyone, moreover, who has ever given himself to a cause, knows that there is more joy to be had from the victory of that cause than from any purely personal triumph, gained by, and for, oneself alone. Our attention, interest, and desire are, and remain, a part of our life. When we give them to anything, we make that thing a part of ourselves, taking its essence into ourselves, and, in proportion to the completeness of our giving, live for the time being with its life. When a man unites his desire with the desire of a mob, he lives with the life of the mob, and the common phenomena of mob consciousness, and mob hysteria, result. That which returns to us is of the essence and character of that to which we gave our interest and desire. It may be excitement and psychic stimulation, if we watch, let us say, college foot-ball. It may be evil, if we give attention and desire to evil. It may be nobility and the radiant life of the spirit.

The point is that the life which comes back to us, and with which we then live, has the nature, intensity, power, and richness, of that to which we give our attention, interest and desire. Those who limit their interest to their own personality, limit to its petty concerns the life they can live. Those who give themselves to a noble cause feel with the greatness of that cause. Measuring merely the keenness of the feeling, Nathan Hale, giving his life for his country, must have felt with an intensity far beyond anything which a coward, fleeing from his duty, could possibly feel. No matter how intense his fear, the coward's capacity for feeling is limited to the capacity of his personality. Nathan Hale had made himself one with the total store of love of country, so that, giving himself wholly to it, he felt with all of it. This accounts for the passionate intensity of soldiers in war.

Those who give themselves completely to their cause, may at moments of crisis be lifted wholly out of themselves.

The Great War furnishes many instances of this. Take for example the fight at Bois-Brule, a fight the Germans appeared to have won, for, against their overwhelming numbers, there remained in the French trench only corpses and one officer, Lieutenant Pericard. He, as he says,—

> Was transported with rage at the thought of the Boche victory, and cried out, "To your feet, ye dead men". Was it raving madness? No. For the dead replied. They said to me: "We follow you". And, rising at my call, their souls mingled with mine and formed a flaming mass, a mighty stream of molten metal. Nothing could now astonish or hinder me. I had the faith which removes mountains. . . . As for myself, it seems as if I had been given a body which had grown and expanded inordinately—the body of a giant, with superabundant, limitless energy, with extraordinary facility of thought which enabled me to have my eye in ten places at a time—to call out an order to one man while indicating an order to another by a gesture—to fire a gun and protect myself at the same time from a threatening grenade.
>
> A prodigious intensity of life coupled with extraordinary episodes! On two occasions we ran completely out of grenades, and on two occasions we discovered full sacks of them at our feet, mixed with the sandbags. All day long we had been walking over them without seeing them. . . . At last we were again masters of the situation in our angle.
>
> Throughout the evening and for several days following I remained under the influence of the spiritual emotion by which I had been carried away at the time of the summons to the dead. I had something of the same feeling that one has after partaking fervently of the communion. I recognized that I had just been living through such hours as I should never see again, during which my head, having by violent exertion broken through the ceiling, had risen into the region of the supernatural, into the invisible world peopled by gods and heroes. At that moment certainly I was lifted above myself.

Lieutenant Pericard went on to say that he had done nothing of any sort to earn approbation for himself. It was not from the lips of a man that the summons had issued. Why had he—who, he said, never had to leap over the parapet without shivering with fright—been chosen in place of some one whose courage had not, like his, known faltering. "Wherefore? Because one may receive inspiration from above and yet be only a poor ordinary man."

Such strength and vividness of feeling simply obliterate any thought of the personal self. The feelings of that self, perhaps what it would at other times call its excruciating pain, may be so pushed into the background that the man is not even conscious of their existence. During the war, nurses at the front dressing-stations commented on the fact that, on coming to consciousness, the first questions of the wounded, though perhaps mortally hurt or maimed for life, were not of themselves but of how the battle had gone. At Waterloo, a French colonel of cavalry was badly wounded in the arm. He had a surgeon amputate his arm then and there, leaped on his horse and charged back again into the mêlée. In a minor degree, this domination of physical pain to the point of insensibility to it, when under the influence of a stronger interest, is within the experience of everyone. Most people, after some crisis, have found themselves bleeding from a hurt they were totally unconscious of having received. Instances such as those quoted, demonstrate clearly that there is in man that which

transcends his personality, and which, when aroused, feels far more keenly. It is of this far richer consciousness that the seers and saints of all ages have testified, from the time of the Upanishads, millenniums ago in ancient India, through a long line to the present day.

The Ancient Wisdom teaches that man *is* the soul, and that the personality is only its instrument. The soul of each man is a spark of the one, divine Consciousness, and hence contains within itself, potentially, all the powers of the Divine. The soul can, however, only realize its powers, in incarnation, to the extent to which it has succeeded in developing an instrument capable of giving them expression. The field of its possible perception, and the range of its possible action, are limited directly by the degree of development of its vehicle, the personality. It follows that its evolution, and the unfolding of its powers, are dependent upon its ability gradually and progressively to develop an adequate instrument. It is a universal law that all forces and powers can only find expression through some vehicle, and this is as true of the soul as of everything else. A violinist, for example, may be the incarnation of music itself, but he can only give it physical expression through the instrumentality of his hands, and only to the extent to which he has trained them to instinctive and exact obedience to his will. In just the same way, the soul can only express itself to the extent to which the personality has been trained to instinctive and exact obedience to its will.

Failure so to train the personality to obedience is analogous to the failure of a child to gain control of its bodily instrument. It must dominate eyes and ears and tongue before it can see, hear or speak. If it fail to do so, these powers remain dormant. Failure of the soul to dominate, to impose its will, means that the powers of the soul remain dormant. Life is no less impoverished in consequence, because the man may never suspect his loss. A community of the blind would be just as blind if they had never heard of the ability to see.

For our present purposes, we may say that the personality is everything in a man that is not within the immediate control of the soul as its direct instrument —and that means a very large part of what we think of as ourselves. It means that the personality has a life, and desires, and a will stolen from the soul, and usually in active revolt against it. Of course, the personality, which is intended to be the instrument of the soul, has no more right to an independent will of its own than a man's hand or eye has to assert itself against his will. When eyes or hands do so assert themselves in uncontrolled action, the physical results are disastrous; the spiritual results are no less disastrous when the personality asserts itself against the soul. The age-old simile is that of the rider and his horse; it is often fatal for both when the horse runs away with the rider. The right attitude is that of the cavalryman, who cares for his steed because he needs it to carry out his purpose, but who, in a charge, becomes utterly indifferent both to its fate and to his own.

The existence of these two natures within us, and the conflict between them, is a commonplace of everyday experience. The simplest distinction is the one drawn many thousand years ago in the Upanishads, between the "better" and

the "dearer", between what we ought to do, and what we want to do. In general, what a man feels he "ought" to do, is the reflection, often much distorted as it passes through his mind, of the desires of the soul; what he feels he "wants" to do, is usually the desire of his personality. The essence of the soul is universal, and its desire is to carry out the purposes for which it was created—the expression in action of its nature, one with the divine nature—in so far as the unconquered dullness of its instrument makes that possible. All selflessness, compassion for others, nobility, honour, valour, action on principle as against expediency, and, in general, all effort for a true ideal, is of the soul. The essence of the personality is separateness and selfishness. It is interested only in itself, or in other things only as they affect it, its vanity, ambition, desires, comfort, or whatever it may be. Dominance by the personality shuts a man in an ever-narrowing prison, with walls of mirrors. Wherever he looks, he sees only the image of himself reflected back at him. Great causes or events mean only the effect that they will have on him personally, as that he himself will make more or less money, have more or less pleasure, or adulation, or comfort. *Light on the Path* describes this as the fierce driving inward that at last leaves a man only the space of a pin-head in which to dwell. Heir to all the riches of the soul, brother of the stars, he locks himself in a hovel in a corner of his own vast estate, desperately clutching the pitiful trifles he has stolen from himself.

The worst of the trouble is that after such self-imprisonment has long continued, the man loses the realization that the whole estate is rightfully his own, and that it and its riches await his claiming. The power of the personality against the soul depends entirely on this loss of recollection and consequent confusion of identity, so that the man believes that he *is* the personality, its desires his, and, most important of all, its limitations his. The personality does all that it can, therefore, to augment this confusion, and to lead the man to identify himself with it, seeking to limit his interest to its concerns, in order that it may concentrate all his attention and desire on itself. It is on these that it feeds and by which it grows. Its desires lose most of their power when they are seen for what they are, things outside of the man's real self. Take, for instance, the desire to "hit back" which our personalities feel when friends, with more candour than we enjoy, point out some failing of which we ought to be ashamed—and perhaps are. It makes an immense difference whether we say to ourselves, "Who is he anyway, to criticize *me* that way. He does much worse things himself. I am going to tell him what I think of him"; or whether we say: "I must watch out at that point. And here is my wretched personality boiling with hurt vanity, and trying to make me hit back at an old friend, because it has been shown up at its contemptible tricks." The personality hates having its faults pointed out. The soul welcomes it, just as a novice tennis player, preparing for a tournament, welcomes having an expert player point out his faults, that he may correct them. The character of one's reaction to criticism is a sure test of the centre of one's self-identification at the time.

The struggle and ultimate determination of whether a man is to identify himself with his lower self or with the soul, constitutes the battle of life. Victory

goes to the side which he decides to be "himself", and to which, in consequence, he throws his will. The desire of the soul, as we have said, is to carry out the purpose for which it was created, the expression, to the extent of its ability, of its own divine nature. What this purpose demands of him is reflected, with a greater or less degree of distortion, in each man's mind as his own ideal. What a man can see of the ideal is measured by the degree of his development, and by the obedience which he has heretofore rendered to his vision. Each act of obedience makes the vision clearer. Each failure obscures it. The desires of his personality—usually anything but ideal—are also impressed upon his mind, but from below; and the battle is fought out between them, there in the mind. Almost every moment brings its need for decision. Shall I write that letter, which my ideal of courtesy calls for, or shall I continue to sit here comfortably by the fire and read? I am conscious of both desires within me. Which is "mine"? Each such conflict forces the will to choose, forces us, consciously or unconsciously, to identify ourselves with the soul or with the personality, building up correspondingly our centre of self-identification in the higher or in the lower self. Most minds are public corridors, thronged from without by clamouring desires, claiming to be "our" desires. The power to discern clearly, to reject the false claims, and to identify ourselves with our true self and its purposes, is perhaps the most important and least understood of all our powers. Our immortality depends upon it. To the extent to which we identify ourselves with that which dies, we die. When we identify ourselves with that which is immortal, to that extent we gain immortality.

The difficulty of identifying oneself with the soul is increased, at first, by the fact that since the soul is not subject to the limitations which give sharp definition to the personality, its concerns appear impersonal, remote and utterly lacking in intensity and vividness. How false this impression is we have seen. The reason it exists, is because we have, for the most part, as yet given so little of our interest to the things of the soul. Thus, in the beginning, the spiritual life may seem grey and drab; we seem to have so little there with which to feel. But as we give more of our attention and interest, and that part of our life which they carry with them, to the soul, we build up the power to identify ourselves with the soul, and to make our own the intensity and richness of the consciousness that pertains to it. Each of the great qualities of the soul has its own type of consciousness, its own "feel". We share in this and feel it when we give ourselves completely to that quality and make it manifest in action. When, for example, a question of honour against expediency arises, and a man decides instantly and irrevocably on the side of honour, he will feel with the consciousness of honour. To feel this, however, the decision must be instant, whole-hearted and final; any mental debate about it, or any fear of consequences, will so adulterate the feeling that it will be unrecognizable. He may still decide rightly, but he will lose the consciousness that ought to be a part of his reward.

That is one reason why, "To go half way is misery, but all the way is heaven". It is really a question of transferring, grain by grain, our interest and self-identification from the lower centre of the personality to the higher centre of the soul.

Each decision that we make, adds to one of these centres and subtracts from the other, correspondingly increasing or diminishing the power of intense feeling from that centre. Selfless love is the ideal way of effecting this transfer rapidly and without effort from the lower to the higher. The goal of the soul is a passionate, selfless, adoration of its Master, the great one at the head of its "Ray". That attained, all else becomes easy. Pending the development of such love, the transfer must be effected slowly, a little at a time, by conscious act of will, in obedience to the highest ideal we can see. This obedience will itself uncover, in time, the love that is the essential nature of the soul. Spiritual growth consists in this transfer of interest to, and progressive self-identification with, the soul. All disinterested love, all sympathy with others, in fact, all broadening of interest to include what does not affect oneself—the study, for instance, of history, science, or art—tends to weaken self-absorption, and to that extent is a first step in preparation for this transfer.

The one great obstacle is self-love. Next to the love of that which is greater than self, perhaps the best way to break down self-love is by the constant effort to express the ideal. The result is certain to be as constantly marred by the self, by its sloth, its vanity, its self-indulgence and all its other failings. If we struggle against these marring propensities of the self, we come, in time, to see their possessor for what it is, and to lose something at least of our consuming love for that which continually frustrates us. No one who really tries to live up to the highest that he can see, remains pleased with his performance or with himself for long. Self-satisfaction always shows inadequate perception of the ideal. Its eradication is in itself an essential step, for it is impossible for anyone to grow who is satisfied with himself as he is.

Even a minimum of right self-identification brings an immediate reward in many ways, among them freedom from the petty fears that dominate so many lives, fear of what others will think, fear of losing one's standing in the community, fear of one's own view of oneself. Much of the desire for wealth and power is the subconscious desire to bolster up one's own worth in one's own eyes. He who knows himself to be heir to all that is, a Prince of the Household of Heaven, is not likely to be much distressed by what his neighbour thinks of his disguise. When, as a fugitive, after his defeat, the Marquis of Montrose escaped across Scotland, dressed as a groom, it was little he cared that his disguise was not the rich dress of a wealthy merchant. He was Marquis of Montrose, in one garb as in another; what matter how he appeared to the idlers at the inns where he stopped. This does not mean that he was satisfied with himself as Marquis. It means that his knowledge of what he was, lifted him above pettiness. It also brought its responsibilities. *Noblesse oblige*. In the end, he gave his life for his loyalty to his King. The universe does not offer its great gifts at a cheap price. Those who would share in the rich life of the soul must live by the laws of the soul. There is no other way.

J. F. B. M.

MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

III. The Seven Portals and the Six Paramitas

Let the Bodhisattva feel towards all sentient beings as if they were himself. Let him think: "If I am to be completely free from all woes, let them also be so in the same measure. I cannot leave them to their fate."—Ashtasahasrika Sutra.

As Madame Blavatsky explained, *The Voice of the Silence* is a translation of excerpts from *The Book of the Golden Precepts*, a scripture of the Lodge. Because its doctrine is of the Lodge, it is not peculiar to any particular religion. It is neither of the East nor of the West, for the truths which it affirms are of universal import. These truths are lived by every member of the Lodge and are divined by every mystic. They are the inner principles common to all religions, never changing in essence, varying only in outer form according to the nature of the race or individual in which they are reflected.

Madame Blavatsky apparently based her translation of the "Golden Precepts" upon what may be called the Buddhist version. There was good reason for her choice. She points out that the "Precepts" are an integral part of the mystical canon of certain Mahayana schools; and that according to legend, they were revealed by the "Serpents of Wisdom" to Nagarjuna, the most renowned of the Mahayana sages. Moreover, many of the Mahayana texts known to Orientalists manifest an identity of spirit with *The Voice of the Silence* which suggests an ultimate identity of origin. The Bodhisattva Doctrine, the central subject of the Mahayana, is the major theme of *The Voice of the Silence*, especially of Fragments II and III, "The Two Paths" and "The Seven Portals". We shall be better able to understand why various Buddhist forms of thought were adopted by the translator of the "Golden Precepts", if we reflect upon what those forms have actually signified to generations of Buddhists.

In "The Two Paths", the aspirant is enjoined "to separate Head-learning from Soul-wisdom, the 'Eye' from the 'Heart' Doctrine. . . . The *open* Path leads to the changeless change—Nirvana, the glorious state of Absoluteness, the Bliss past human thought. Thus the first Path is Liberation. . . . But Path the second is Renunciation, and therefore called the 'Path of Woe'. That *Secret* Path leads the Arhan to mental woe unspeakable; woe for the living Dead, and helpless pity for the men of karmic sorrow."

Many passages stressing the same message might be quoted from the Mahayana scriptures. The Way of the Buddha of Compassion is continually contrasted with the Way of the Pratyeka Buddha; for the Buddhas of Compassion and their disciples, the Bodhisattvas, renounce Nirvana and toil selflessly for humanity during countless æons, whereas the Pratyeka Buddhas and their imitators seek only personal liberation from pain and re-birth. As the Mahayana philosophers are fond of repeating, it is their dedication to the "Path of Woe"

that distinguishes them from the Hinayana monks, the *sravakas* who aspire only to selfish bliss in the timeless ecstasy of Nirvana.

To the *sravakas*, the Blessed One preached the doctrine which is associated with the Four Noble Truths and leads to the formula of Dependent Origination. It aims at transcending birth, old age, disease, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress of mind, and weariness; and it ends in Nirvana. But to the Great Beings, the Bodhisattvas, he preached the doctrine which is associated with the six Paramitas and which ends in the Knowledge of the Omniscient One after the attainment of the supreme and perfect Wisdom (*bodhi*) (*Saddharma-pundarika*).

The Great Being, the Bodhisattva, while girding on his armour, does not discriminate between the creatures, saying: "So many creatures shall I help to obtain complete Nirvana, in which no material substratum remains; and so many creatures shall I not help in this way." The Bodhisattva, the Great Being, verily dons his armour for the sake of all creatures (*Sata-sahasrika Prajña-Paramita*).

A *bodhisattva* wishes to help all creatures to attain *nirvana*. He must therefore refuse to enter *nirvana* himself, as he cannot apparently render any services to the living beings of the world after his own *nirvana*. He thus finds himself in the rather illogical position [from the standpoint of Head-learning] of pointing the way to *nirvana* for other beings, while he himself stays in this world of suffering in order to do good to all creatures. This is his great sacrifice for others. He has taken the great Vow: "I shall not enter into *nirvana* before all beings have been liberated." . . . He does not realize the highest Liberation for himself, as he cannot abandon them to their fate. He has said: "I must lead all beings to Liberation. I will stay here till the end, even for the sake of one living soul" (Har Dayal: *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 17-18).

"The Seven Portals" describes the seven stages of the "Way of Woe", the seven initiations in consciousness that must be undergone by the candidate for Bodhisattvaship. These initiations include the acquisition of the Paramitas or "Perfections", the creative forces inherent in all consciousness, but which only become manifest in their proper nature, when consciousness is enlightened by knowledge of itself. Six of the Portals bear the names of the Paramitas,—Dana, Shila, Kshanti, Virya, Dhyana, and Prajña. The fourth Portal, Viraga, is not found in any list of the Paramitas, but the quality for which it stands is implicit in the conception of the other six; for these are naturally divisible into two groups of three, and Viraga is the bridge spanning the gap between these groups.

Orientalists generally translate "Paramita" as "perfection" or "virtue", sometimes adding the qualification, "transcendental". This is, doubtless, correct as far as it goes, but it scarcely covers all the connotations which the Sanskrit word suggests to the Buddhist mind. For example, there are these typical passages from the scriptures, as given by Dr. Har Dayal in the work from which we have already quoted: "The *paramitas* . . . 'are the great oceans of all the bright virtues and auspicious principles', and confer prosperity and happiness on all creatures. They are a *bodhisattva's* best friends. They are 'the Teacher, the Way and the Light'. They are 'the Refuge and the Shelter, the Support and the Sanctuary'. They are, indeed, 'Father and Mother to all'. Even the Buddhas are their children" (p. 171).

These phrases describe something more vital, more dynamic than is usually

indicated by "perfection" or "virtue". The Paramitas, as conceived by the Mahayana mystics, are creative forces, corresponding to the formative powers of cosmic Nature, for they engender and build the spiritual organism of man. The Tibetans and the Chinese convey this idea by a metaphor. They translate or paraphrase the Sanskrit word by the expression: "to pass to the other shore". Whatever may be the etymology of the term, this signifies, better than any definition, what it means in the Mahayana. The Paramitas are the powers which enable man to reach his destined haven, to realize in its full splendour the Buddha-nature which is the ground of his real being.

Each Paramita "has three degrees: it may be ordinary, extraordinary or superlatively extraordinary (i.e. good, better, and the best). It is ordinary, when it is practised by ordinary worldly persons for the sake of happiness in this life or the next; it is extraordinary, when it is cultivated by the Hinayanists for the sake of personal *nirvana;* but it is of the highest degree, when it is acquired by the Mahayanist *bodhisattvas* for the welfare and liberation of all beings" (Har Dayal, *op. cit.*, p. 171). In each degree, the Paramitas do not manifest themselves simultaneously, but successively and cumulatively. First Dana appears, then Dana and Shila, and so on, until all six are functioning; after which the series re-commences in the next degree. The process may be compared to an ascending spiral, each succeeding phase repeating the stages of its predecessor but on a higher plane. By "higher" is meant not only "more perfect" but "more conscious". It is important that this should be understood, for the Bodhisattva does not differ from the man of the world or the Hinayanist *sravaka*, merely because he practises the same virtues more rigorously. He is superior to them because he is really conscious of what he is doing and why he is doing it.

This distinction may become clearer if we consider the implications of the following, from the *Diamond Sutra*. The reference is to Dana, but it is equally applicable to the other Paramitas.

> O Subhuti, a gift should not be given by a Bodhisattva, while he believes in the self-existence of objects; a gift should not be given by him, while he believes in anything. . . . For thus, O Subhuti, should a gift be given by a noble-minded Bodhisattva, that he should not believe even in the idea of [ordinary] causation. . . . And if a noble-minded Bodhisattva were to fill immeasurable and innumerable spheres of worlds with the seven treasures, and give them as a gift to holy and fully-enlightened Tathagatas; and if a son or daughter of good family, after taking from this treatise of the Law, this Prajña Paramita, one Gatha of four lines only, should learn it, repeat it, understand it, and fully explain it to others, then the latter would on the strength of this produce a larger store of merit, immeasurable and innumerable.

It may be said that the ordinary man is good or bad, almost by accident, according to the quality of the forces acting upon him at the moment. The extraordinary man, like the *sravaka*, works for a definite end, and thus increases his susceptibility to forces of a certain order. But the Bodhisattva lays aside the consciousness of being a self, a personal entity, finding his real identity within the "Master-Soul", the mind of the Buddha. The Paramitas no longer act upon him as if he were something external to them. He acts in them and with

them. They are his own attributes and become manifest in all his acts and thoughts. There is a Chinese story of a sage who was asked what a man does after he has attained enlightenment. The answer was: "He sits on the grass, beside a pleasant stream, and drinks tea." It really cannot matter what he does, for he can do nothing which is not charged with spiritual energy. In brief, whereas the man of the world may *have* virtues, the Bodhisattva *is* the virtue which he is practising at any moment. He does not shine with reflected light, but is the light which other men reflect.

The first three Paramitas, as was said, constitute a distinct group. They are Dana, Shila, and Kshanti,—charity, righteousness, and patience.

I. Dana, "the key of charity and love immortal. . . . Hast thou attuned thy being to Humanity's great pain, O candidate for light?" (*The Seven Portals*).

In its simplest form, Dana is the movement of the heart which causes us to feel pity, sympathy, kindness towards others, and which awakens the desire to give pleasure or to relieve distress, especially if this involve some real or even imagined sacrifice on our part. The Buddha, like the Christ, laid great stress upon the cultivation and extension of the natural humane sentiments which are the basis of friendship and which make social life endurable. The two Golden Rules of Buddhism are "Do unto others as you would do unto yourself," and "Do unto others as they [their best selves] wish that you should do unto them."

Inevitably, in the ordinary man, these sentiments come and go. He has relatively little control over them. In the Bodhisattva, they are limitless and changeless. They are not casually mirrored in his nature, since they constitute its very substance. His whole being is a flame of love and compassion. In his heart, the latent adoration and gratitude of mankind for the Buddhas come to full expression; and a returning current of consciousness flowing from the "Buddha-Heart" takes the place of his "lower personal Manas", filling him with the longing to share the Buddhas' unceasing toil on behalf of those who are still bound to the wheel of re-birth. The Bodhisattva feels the pleasures and sorrows of others as his own. His desire to give is insatiable. He is ready to lay down, at any instant, rank, power, wealth, life, for "he loves all beings as a mother loves her only child". Whenever Karma permits, he donates his "store of Merit", the power which he has accumulated as an effect of the good which he has done in this and other incarnations.

Moreover, he is careful to guard against self-righteousness or any possible thought of self-interest, by sacrificing the immediate merit which accrues from any act of self-sacrifice. "I do not make this sacrifice in order to secure a happy rebirth as a king or a *deva;* and I do not think even of the felicity of Liberation. By the merit of my charitable deed, may I become the guide and saviour of the world, which is lost in the wilderness of mundane existence. I wish to accomplish the good of others" (*Nagananda*).

II. Shila, "the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for karmic action".

Shila is the translation of charitable sentiment into action. Without Shila,

Dana degenerates into sentimentality or unwise interference with Karma. Likewise, Shila is the self-discipline which purges the nature of the inhuman impulses, the "elementals", which strangle our humane aspirations. It is the power which destroys lust, greed, hatred, malice, folly and self-will. In so far as Shila is operative, man follows the highway of normal evolution, and progresses steadily towards the goal of Inner Self-Realization. This would seem to be the essence of the Buddhist conception of righteousness.

The Buddhist observes ten Commandments:—not to kill living beings; not to steal (literally, to abstain from taking what is not given); to abstain from unchastity; not to lie; not to speak slanderously; to abstain from harsh speech; to abstain from frivolous and foolish talk; not to covet the goods of another; to abstain from malevolence; to abstain from heresy. The Bodhisattva adapts his conduct to these injunctions, but in each instance he broadens and deepens the range of his observance. In one sense, he may be said to *live* each Commandment rather than merely to keep it. Also, his whole attitude is positive. He not only abstains from killing animals for amusement; he cherishes and helps them. He not only abstains from lying, even in his dreams; he learns to wield Truth like a weapon. His conduct is harmonized and gracious. His speech is the counterpart of his thought, courteous and gentle, and at the same time, authoritative and virile. No quality of nature is over-developed or under-developed in relation to the rest. He is the "Good Companion", who is likewise the most austere of saints. Though his ruling passion is to assist others, he does not compromise with evil, nor is he in any sense a pacifist. On occasion, his assistance may take the form of vigorous chastisement. It is no accident that Japanese chivalry, *bushido*, the code of the warrior caste, was inspired by the teaching of the Zen branch of the Mahayana.

The Bodhisattva follows the path of action described in the *Bhagavad Gîta*. He does what is right, letting Karma determine without interference the results of his act. This is illustrated by a charming myth cited by Dr. Har Dayal (*op. cit.*, p. 208). "Sakra, the chief of the *devas*, observed the first precept by turning back his aerial car in order to spare some tiny nests, even though he was hotly pursued by his enemies, the Demons, after the defeat of his army. But his humane action gave him the victory, as the Demons were bewildered and thrown into confusion by this sudden and unexpected movement."

III. Kshanti, "patience sweet, that nought can ruffle. . . . Fear, O Disciple kills the will and stays all action. . . . Be of sure foot, O candidate. In Kshanti's essence bathe thy Soul; for now thou dost approach the portal of that name, the gate of fortitude and patience. . . . Beware of trembling. 'Neath the breath of fear the key of Kshanti rusty grows: the rusty key refuseth to unlock".

Kshanti includes the ideals of resignation, patience, acceptance of adversity, forgiveness. It is, in a sense, the equivalent of Christian fortitude. The orthodox Buddhist, however, has one advantage over the orthodox Christian. He is taught that the trials which make up the greater part of life are unavoidable effects of past sins, and that their future recurrence is prevented, in some measure at least, by his present cheerful acceptance of them. "If disciples meet with the

ills of life they should not shun them. If they suffer painful experiences, they should not feel afflicted or treated unjustly, but should always rejoice in remembering the deep significance of *dharma*, the Good Law" (*The Awakening of Faith Sutra*).

The scriptures stress the fact that patient endurance of pain sooner or later brings clear knowledge of the cause of pain, the sediment of unwisdom and blind desire which has existed in the *alaya* or "soul" during the beginningless past. Thus the disciple realizes the truth that misery proceeds from the heresy of separateness, from the belief in the self-existence of a "personality", whose wants must be satisfied. This realization awakens the will to destroy in himself this Great Illusion which is the root of pain. Having destroyed the Great Illusion in himself, he can completely dedicate himself to the task of helping others who are less fortunate.

When Kshanti Paramita is fully operative, two of the greatest foes of the disciple are slain,—fear and ambition. He will gratefully take whatever the Good Law provides. He will refrain from any attempt to over-speed the processes of evolution. When Kshanti has become a veritable attribute of the Bodhisattva's will, its whole meaning becomes, as it were, transformed. The "patience" of the Bodhisattva is wholly positive, inasmuch as it becomes "a whole-hearted acceptance of the ultimate fact (*tattvam*) as perceived by a mind free from errors or wrong judgments (*vikalpa*)" (D. T. Suzuki: *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra*, p. 126).

What may be taken as the supreme significance of Kshanti is suggested by a combination of words frequently used by the Mahayana mystics. It is *anutpattika-dharma-kshanti*, and means literally "unborn-object-patience". Dr. Suzuki says: "The idea is simply that reality or Dharma or existence in general is beyond all predicable attributes, and therefore in the failure of language and intellect, definition is impossible, and being outside the ken of all but direct perception, all we can state of it is emptiness or unbornness in the absolute sense" (*op. cit.*, p. 125).

When a Buddha willingly accepts the pain of being born in the world of men, although he has personally gained deliverance from the karmic necessity of incarnation, he practises the highest form of Kshanti. So it is said that *samsara* (birth-and-death), and the changeless bliss of Nirvana, are really one state of consciousness in the mind of the Buddha. The conception seems to be identical with that of the Virgin Birth, in one of its mystical meanings.

Charity, righteousness and patience are qualities which exist in some degree wherever there is any spark of real consciousness in the world; in Christian terms, wherever there is a soul. But the three higher Paramitas, Virya, Dhyana and Prajña, are less easy to imagine or to formulate, for their action in the average man is spasmodic, diffused, and in large part subconscious or superconscious. Before they can be reached by the consciousness, the bridge of Viraga must be built. Viraga, as *The Seven Portals* tells us, is "indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived, . . . the feeling of absolute indifference to the objective universe, . . . the portal of temptations

which do ensnare the *inner* man." In one sense, it may be conceived as the transformation of will and desire, induced by the long-continued and progressive application of Dana, Shila, and Kshanti. This transformation must be measurably completed, before the disciple's consciousness can assimilate the "vital electricity" of Virya Paramita.

IV. Virya, "the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal Truth, out of the mire of lies terrestrial" (*The Seven Portals*). Virya literally means "the state of a strong man, vigour, strength, power, heroism, prowess, valour, fortitude, courage, firmness, virility" (*Pali Dicy. and Skt. Dicy. M. W.*). Its opposite is *kausidya* (indolence, sloth). The energy signified by Virya Paramita is spiritual and inward. It is the continuous tension of a will which never allows itself to be surprised or overtaken. The Bodhisattva, the embodiment of Virya, never divests himself of his armour; the warfare in which he is engaged is interrupted by no armistice. His attention to what he is doing never flags, and this attention can change its object instantaneously. One has the impression of a mind and will perfectly attuned, of a clear vision which nothing can distract from its immediate function, whatever that may be.

> Disciples should be indefatigably zealous and never let even the thought of indolence arise in their minds; but steadily and persistently out of deep compassion endeavour to benefit all beings. They should dauntlessly, energetically, without intermission, six watches, day and night, pay homage to all the Buddhas, make offerings to them, praise them, repent and confess to them, aspire to the most excellent knowledge, and make sincere vows of unselfish service. It is only thereby that they can root out the hindrances and foster their root of merit (*Awakening of Faith Sutra*).

V. Dhyana, "whose golden gate once opened leads the Narjol toward the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation. . . . [It is] the Bodhi Portal. The Dhyana gate is like an alabaster vase, white and transparent; within there burns a steady golden fire, the flame of Prajña that radiates from Atma. Thou art that vase" (*The Seven Portals*).

"Dhyana" is almost impossible to translate, partly because there is no English equivalent, partly because it symbolizes an experience which transcends all our ordinary mental moulds. It cannot be understood until it is lived, as the Mahayana philosophers constantly insist. It includes concentration, meditation, contemplation, calm, recollection, peace, joy, and is the power which admits the Bodhisattva to the heavens of the *rupa* and *arupa devas*, the divinities of the manifested and unmanifested spheres. The presence of Dhyana in his consciousness immeasurably increases the love which he already feels for all living beings. Finally it induces in him the state of *samadhi*, endowing him with "absolute control over all his faculties". Having thus finally subdued his "lower personality", the Bodhisattva becomes a co-worker with Nature, entering into full understanding of her finer forces. When the occasion demands, he can perform without effort so-called miracles and feats of magic.

The *Awakening of Faith Sutra* gives the following injunctions to the disciple who seeks to assimilate the Dhyana Paramita.

The beginner should consider and practise Dhyana in two aspects: as cessation of the mind's intellectual activities, and as realization of insight. To bring to a stand all mental states that produce vagrant thinking, is called cessation. To understand adequately the transitoriness and emptiness and egolessness of all things, is insight. At first, each of them should be practised separately by the beginner, but when, by degrees, he attains facility, and finally attains perfection, the two aspects will naturally blend into one perfect state of mental tranquility. Those who practise Dhyana should dwell in solitude and, sitting erect, should remain motionless, seeking to quiet the mind. . . . As in all thinking something precedes that has been awakened by an external stimulus, so in Dhyana one should seek to abandon all notions connected with an external world. . . . Because his attention is distracted by the external world, he is warned to turn to his inner, intuitive consciousness. If the process of mentation begins again, he is warned not to let his mind become attached to anything, because, independent of mind, what we call things have no existence. Dhyana is not at all to be confined to sitting erect in meditation; one's mind should be concentrated at all times, whether sitting, standing, moving, working; one should constantly discipline oneself to that end. Gradually entering into the state of *samadhi*, he will transcend all hindrances and become strengthened in faith, a faith that will be immovable.

As the *Daça-bhumika-Sutra* says, when the Bodhisattva attains the "Blessedness of Tranquillity", which is the essence of Dhyana, "he abides pervading the whole Universe with his mind, accompanied by the sentiment of love [for all sentient beings] with vast, great, undivided, unlimited, and universal freedom from hatred, rivalry, narrow-mindedness and harmfulness."

VI. Prajña, "The key to which makes of a man a God, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis. . . . Thou shalt attain the seventh step and cross the gate of final knowledge, but only to wed woe—if thou wouldst be Tathagata, follow upon thy predecessor's steps, remain unselfish till the endless end. Thou art enlightened—choose thy way" (*The Seven Portals*).

Prajña is "inner Self-realization" (*pratyatmagocara*). When the Bodhisattva enters into this state, the power of Dhyana, the contemplative energy, becomes so intense that the illusory barrier dividing subject from object, the seer from the seen, is broken down. The perceiver and the perceived are realized to be one, and Truth is known through union with it. Thus Prajña is the transcendental knowledge which opens the portals of Nirvana to the Arhat. However, in its pure essence, it is inseparable from *mahakaruna* (the great compassion), since it is the wisdom of the heart which inspires the Bodhisattva to renounce the inestimable personal reward, the prize of Nirvana, to which he is entitled. Prajña brings the certitude that what we call existence is of the texture of a dream, but also it is the unalterable determination of the Bodhisattva's will never to forsake his brethren whom he has outdistanced in the race of life and who still linger behind, bewitched by the Great Illusion.

The Prajña Paramita is so far beyond the compass of our mental processes that the mystics can only describe it in metaphor and paradox. That is why the average Orientalist sees in the doctrine of Prajña nothing but a bundle of contradictions. For example, it is often stated in the Mahayana scriptures that although the Bodhisattva is a radiant centre of wisdom and compassion, he never thinks of himself as possessing either wisdom or compassion. Should such

a thought enter his mind, he would cease to be a Bodhisattva. His authority rests upon his selflessness, and yet he is the most individual of men. He knows that all sentient beings and all their adventures and sorrows are *sunyata*, void and illusion, and nothing more. But the more certain is his perception of the emptiness of all existences, the greater is his compassion for them. How can this be? One can only repeat the affirmation of the Mahayana sages, that in the domain of pure undivided consciousness, where the Bodhisattva dwells, *sunyata* and Prajña are seen to be one. Within the matrix of the Great Illusion, the Buddha, the Enlightened One, is born. Because the creature is empty, the Spirit yearns to enter into it. So Madame Blavatsky describes the essence of compassion as "an abstract, impersonal law, whose nature being absolute Harmony is thrown into confusion by discord, suffering and sin."

We read in the *Diamond Sutra:*

> Anyone who has entered upon the Path of the Bodhisattvas must thus frame his thought: As many beings as there are in the world, with form or without form, with name or without name, as far as any world of beings is known, all these must be delivered by me in the perfect world of Nirvana. And yet, after I have thus delivered innumerable beings, not one single being has been delivered. And why? If, O Subhuti, a Bodhisattva had any belief in [the self-existence of] a being, he could not be called a Bodhisattva.... An Arhat does not think thus: the fruit of Arhatship has been obtained by me. And why? Because an Arhat is not a separate entity. Therefore, is he called an Arhat. If he were to think: Arhatship has been obtained by me, he would be a believer in self-existent entities, he would be a believer in personalities.

In some lists, there are four supplementary Paramitas, making a total of ten. These are *upaya* or *upaya-kausalya* ("skilful means", the faculty of speaking to the condition of others); *pranidhana* (aspiration or resolution, the force residing in the Bodhisattva's vows); *bala* (strength, power); and *jñana* (knowledge). The Yogacharya School, however, conceived these to be forms or amplifications of Prajña, rather than independent qualities and energies.

Indeed, each of the six (or ten) Paramitas eludes rigid definition. These spiritual powers illustrate the "unity in diversity" which is the secret of harmony. They interblend and complement one another, like a series of overtones. In the consciousness of the Bodhisattva, as is said, they are synthesized in the supreme Prajña Paramita, the Wisdom of Compassion. Mental speculation concerning the nature of this synthesis is of little value in itself. It is useful only in so far as it suggests an ideal that ultimately can be realized by action. Prajña Paramita is a hidden life, an invisible flame, and we can know it by becoming it, and in no other way.

> Therefore, everyone should seek Self-realization of Prajña Paramita, the Truth of Perfect Wisdom, the Unsurpassable Truth, the Truth that ends all pain, the Truth that is for ever True. O Prajña Paramita, O Transcendent Truth that spans the troubled ocean of life-and-death, safely carry all seekers to the other shore (*Maha-Prajña-Paramita-Hridaya*).

STANLEY V. LADOW.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

IT was cold, colder than usual for November, and when the day's work was over—or was about to begin, depending upon the point of view—several of us instinctively made our way to the home of a friend whose open log fires are a solace and refreshment. After the usual greetings, and we were comfortably installed, the Recorder resolutely produced his note-book and demanded "copy". "You may begin anywhere", he announced cheerfully. There was dead silence. "*You* may begin", he said, turning to the Engineer. "I have spent the entire day", his victim answered, "at committee meetings of our Trade Institute, brought into this world by the pressure of NRA, discussing how to avoid final ruin as the result of NRA's effect on Labour; for Labour has been prodded into wanting the earth, and seems unwilling to leave us a corner from which to watch a Shop Committee of our employees, run and wreck our business."

"An excellent background for your contribution", the Recorder remarked, encouragingly.

The Engineer laughed. "There is a story going the round of the English press", he said, "from which some satisfaction can be drawn, for it suggests that England, which used to see America as the ultimate Golden Calf, and which worshipped her accordingly, is beginning to be less reverential,—possibly, even, to wonder if the Golden Calf is all there is to worship. In any case the story runs that a Professor at the University of London, just appointed to a better position in this country, informed his three-year-old daughter that her home would soon be in America. Saying her prayers that evening, the child concluded: 'Good-bye, dear God; I'm going to America.' "

" 'Out of the mouths of babes', etc." quoted the Philosopher. Then, after a pause he added: "I am wondering how I can link that to something I was going to say. For the life of me, I can't see the slightest connection! Think it over afterwards," he added, turning to the Recorder, "and insert some pithy and more or less brilliant remark that I made at this point, that will connect the two ideas. You won't forget to do that, will you? Then I'll consider it as done.

"I am realizing more and more clearly", he continued, "how true it is that the path of discipleship is a hair-line, a razor's edge. For instance: if, on the one hand, we shut our eyes to evil, we are lost. We must not only recognize its existence, both within ourselves and in the world around us; we must study it, understand it, ceaselessly reckon with it, remain perpetually on our guard and wage relentless warfare against it. On the other hand, woe to the disciple whose heart is not given to his ideal, whose centre of interest is not fixed in the spiritual world, whose longing is for anything less than the true, the good, and the beautiful, both in their ultimate perfection and in their nearest and most immediate expression. 'Love me, love my dog', voices more than a human demand; it

shows why, if we are to love our Master, our 'father in heaven', we *must* learn to love the things that he loves; why we *must*—at first, perhaps, by sheer effort of will—turn our minds to the *desirability* of eternal instead of transitory treasures. But, because evil, and all embodiments of evil, constitute the Antagonist of Masters; and because we cannot serve our own Master with intelligence unless we understand the nature and ways and subterfuges, and the power, of his many enemies (who are essentially one), it becomes an elementary duty, solely for his sake, to face the horrors of sin and wickedness, and to see in them the curse of the human race and the implacable foe of the Lodge.

"Once we have done that, compromise with evil becomes impossible. Compromise springs from lack of conviction; from a faith that is nominal rather than real. I am not speaking, of course, of unimportant issues, in which no principle is involved,—such as the exact money-value of some object; I am speaking of right and wrong, of good and evil, and of values which the best of mankind—the sages and prophets and saviours of all races and epochs—have unanimously declared to be changeless. This does not mean narrow-minded harshness, or Puritanical rigidity; but it does mean honest hatred of hypocrisy, detestation of lying and deceit, and a fearless denunciation of these and similar moral depravities whenever we encounter them on our way through life."

"That is the fundamental reason, as I understand it", said the Historian, "why the QUARTERLY, during the World War and since the Armistice, has never ceased to expose and condemn the character, evil motives and double-dealing of Germany, and why it has deplored the tendency in this country, in England, and to a far less extent in France, to compromise every issue which Germany has raised,—a miserable history of one concession after another, until, inevitably, Germany has become, instead of the empty threat which she was in 1919, a terrible menace and danger. It should be a warning to all of us, as showing to what disastrous results, compromise with evil leads".

"Hitlerism has at least this advantage over the methods of Stresemann," the Student commented: "it has deprived the German-Jew bankers of New York of their excuse for being Pro-German. Further, it has increased the difficulties of the 'compromise-at-any-price' party in England, and has weakened the position of the anti-nationalists in France. A recent speech by Henry Morgenthau Sr., formerly U. S. Ambassador to Turkey, presents the facts so clearly that it is well worth quoting. It was reported in *The New York Times* of November 28th:

> France realizes that if she allows the Germans to arm again they can destroy the French. France knows that she may not have the rest of the world for her allies, and she is not going to let Germany arm. But all the nations are armed to the teeth. Germany has manufactured all kinds of munitions, but she is not quite ready. . . .
>
> I feel that Germany to-day is a great international nuisance which ought not to be tolerated. The German effort is not against the Jews but against intellectual freedom of the German people, and not only in her own boundaries but all over the world against intellectual freedom and individualism.
>
> The crash is going to come sooner than we expect. Hitler is doing his best to mislead the world. No one who has peace in his heart could act as Hitler. Until five or six

months ago the whole world was willing to give Germany another chance, before it found out Hitler's objects.

The next war will be brought about by Germany. The attempt of Germany and France to get together is very good, but there are enough people in Germany who don't want peace. They are blood-thirsty and anxious to get back what they lost, and they want to see Germany become a world power or the power above the world powers.

"I agree with the Philosopher that such a situation would be impossible if it had not been for the wretchedly mistaken sympathy of England for the 'under dog' (as if there were no difference between dogs,—or between good and evil), and for the concessions constantly made to Germany in the obviously futile hope that she would repent and become civilized."

"I should like to revert to what the Philosopher was saying about the need to understand evil", the Engineer now remarked. "There are students of Theosophy who dreadfully waste their energies, and their knowledge. They seem to think it their function to disseminate 'new ideas', while in fact their knowledge has been given them, first to apply within their own natures, and then—and only then—as a means to reinforce in others a tottering belief in some of the bare bones, the uttermost simplicities, of everyday religion. For instance, the modern man has lost his belief in the reality of sin; he regards sensuality and things of that kind, as 'emotional accidents'; some of the worst of sins, such as envy and malice, he excuses as 'misfortunes',—as if people were not responsible for their feelings and motives. As to hell, there is not one professing Christian in a hundred who would not laugh at the idea as an exploded superstition. The modern man has discarded everything 'unpleasant' from his religion, including the Cross, except perhaps in so far as that was God's convenient arrangement to enable us to escape from the consequences of our 'natural human frailty'. Clearly it is the primary duty of Theosophists, in such conditions, to convince themselves (if not already convinced) that sin is a violation of spiritual law, and a perversion of spiritual force, the results of which are, first, suffering, and then, if the lesson of that suffering be not learned, the destruction of the sinner. After they have convinced themselves of this basic truth of life, to the point at which they instinctively act upon it, they should do their utmost to convince others of the same truth. Naturally, all sorts of questions will arise as to what should be counted as sins. The modern man is inclined to set up himself and his own 'conscience' as the sole judge of right and wrong, especially as, in many cases, he has trained his conscience, so-called, to approve of practically anything which he personally wants to do. Here again the student of Theosophy has a 'message', by no means new,—to the effect that to ignore the experience and judgment of the past under this head, is as foolish as to ignore the experience stored up in a standard Cook Book: to begin cooking, whether for yourself or your friends, as if nothing had ever been cooked before, would be to invite indigestion, in its myriad forms, both for yourself and for them, needlessly, recklessly, inhumanly. You laugh; but it would be no laughing matter if you were one of the experimenter's victims! 'A law unto himself': it does not matter so much in the domain of Art, because no one is obliged to look at the horrible daubs and

blobs that result; but if you have to eat what 'a law unto himself' produces, or, worse still, if you have to suffer the consequences of such lawlessness through personal contacts with the improviser, you will quickly realize that moral anarchy is not only ugly, but highly explosive.

"As to hell: the student of Theosophy ought to know from his own observation, as Dante knew, that people still on earth may actually be in hell; for hell is a state of consciousness and creates its own 'place'. In other words, a man may be in New York, or Paris, or in the Gobi Desert, and be in hell; or he may be 'dead', and think himself in any of those places, or in a new place, and be in hell; for hell is a condition in which a man is possessed by the spirit of envy, or of malice, or of fear resulting in hatred, or of bitter resentment, or by any one of the many evils arising from intense self-centredness. Most of us have been in a state resembling hell, for an hour or two, or even longer, at some time in our lives; but in so far as we realized that our condition was morally wrong, and struggled to lift ourselves out of it, finally succeeding in doing so, our state was different from that in which the individual is really possessed by evil,—a state in which, instead of struggling against his feelings, he clings to them, and hates anyone who tries to separate him from them.

"I have known more than one man who has been in hell for years. It is not a state of uninterrupted torment when experienced *on earth;* no physical instrument could endure the strain. There are periods of forgetfulness; there are other periods when a man is able, momentarily, to satisfy his desire,—as he cannot do when excarnated. If, in one environment, he has been restrained from the outer expression or explosion of his wickedness, through fear or other motive, he will find at first immense relief should that restraint be removed, or should he be able to throw it off,—so much so that it may seem to him as if he had escaped from hell into some kind of heaven, where, at least in words (and words are actions) he can give vent to the evil in him freely,—blaming others, justifying himself, defying fate, threatening, slandering, and giving himself a feeling of intense and pleasurable importance by feverish activity of all kinds. Such periods of stimulation do not last, of course, as they are entirely psychic and unreal, ending invariably in a state of collapse, the individual wearying in time of the novelties —people and things—which have served him, like alcohol, as intoxicants, and slumping once more into the desolation of the negative side of his egotism."

"It seems to me", commented the Student, "that any form of religion in which, 'Man, know thyself', has ceased to have spiritual significance, is empty and fruitless. I met not long ago a clergyman—till then a total stranger—whose conversation consisted almost entirely of a recital of his clerical achievements; he boasted like a small boy: it was deplorable. He was sincere, well-meaning, hard working, but undisguisedly ambitious and tragically vain. How absurd, from one point of view, in an ordained exponent of Christianity! From another point of view, what a travesty of the religious spirit! No one should be ordained as a minister until his instructors have helped him to recognize, and to long to overcome, his moral weaknesses, or until self-examination has become his habit."

"I admit", said our Visitor, "that vanity is often absurd, and is always juve-

nile; but I don't see why it should be regarded as a sin. It does not injure other people."

"That argument", the Engineer replied, "is a favourite with drunkards, and with those who habitually use opium and similar drugs. The answer is that no man can live unto himself alone. Vanity is a deadly sin,—perhaps the most destructive of all the sins. Think of a man careering down hill, very largely because it makes him miserable to associate with superiors—with people who could not possibly recognize him as a superior—and who instinctively longs to associate with those who will look up to him, as a saviour, hero, martyr, and as the presiding genius of their circle. Longing for it, he naturally finds it—a very inferior and narrow circle—and does not hesitate to desert 'the better for the dearer', seeing that 'the dearer' caters to his vanity and fills him with the sense of importance and power for which his personality has always yearned. Too self-satisfied to raise himself, he chooses to lower himself in order to reign,—becoming the big frog of a little pond, rather than endure the over-shadowing presence of frogs bigger than he yet is, in a pond of far larger dimensions. It hurts him to look up; he refuses to look up; he insists upon looking down. Where does it end? Inevitably he will have to move further and further down, socially, intellectually, morally, in order *to keep pace with himself*. It is not an uncommon disease. Years ago, in my office, one of our men announced that he was going to resign as he was tired of being eclipsed by 'a bunch' whose manners, education and standards were better than his. He was sufficiently honest with himself, and with me, to admit that he wanted to work with 'a lower class crowd'. I asked him how he expected to improve himself, to grow, except by association with those whom he believed to be his superiors; but argument was useless; he left us, and has been deteriorating steadily ever since. He did not stay for six months with the 'crowd' of his choice, and now is entirely alone, without friends, struggling to pick up a living by doing odd jobs for strangers. He was pivoted on himself, and was doomed, therefore, to revolve in ever-narrowing circles, with his grievances and grudges, envyings and resentments, as the sole companions of his misery. Naturally at first, when he got with his 'lower class crowd', he breathed a sigh of relief, and felt like a man set free from prison; but his doom was with him,—he had doomed himself. He was too centripetal to adhere, so to speak, and quickly sought another and then another set of associates, in whose eyes he could see himself reflected as a bigger and yet bigger deity. There was this much 'excuse' in his case, however: he was married, and his wife had discovered how vain and small he was; so, craving adulation, unable to find it at home, and not satisfied with the respect he might have won from men, for good work, honestly done,—he had to mix with his inferiors to gain temporary admiration for himself as a personality.

"I doubt if any sin clouds the judgment as vanity clouds it. A vain man attributes abilities and qualities to himself which either he does not possess, or which he possesses in far smaller measure than he imagines, the consequence being that he is invariably over-confident, and commits himself to enterprises

and decisions which are more likely than not to turn and rend him as he draws near their outcome. He shuts his eyes to facts which are not flattering, exaggerates in his own mind the importance of trivialities which please him, underestimates the force of men and things opposing him, and thinks of Time as his friend when, in his case, Time is his worst enemy. His 'friends' are those who vote him a great man, who has erred, if at all, by reason of too much generosity, too much patience, endurance, consideration for others, and from a general excess of virtue; his intimates are those who, for purposes of their own, denounce as vigorously as he does the intolerable behaviour of anyone who crosses his will or who tells him unwelcome truths.

"A man who is really vain does not care actually what other people think of him except in so far as their views reinforce his mental picture of himself. It is this picture that he worships, with a fidelity that would land him in the kingdom of heaven quickly and easily, if the object of his worship were different. Being what it is—his picture of himself—he is incapable of love, except love of self; incapable of loyalty, except loyalty to his own interests; incapable of truth, because nothing can be allowed as true if it casts a shadow on his picture of what he is, or of what he expects to accomplish."

"There are men", commented the Historian, "who seem to be fond of children, or of dogs, but whose fondness for either or both is nothing but the enjoyment of 'incense',—of the adulation which a dog pours out on his master, or which a young child offers to someone who seems able and willing to provide protection. Such men can be positively cruel to dogs which show dislike of them, and are harsh or worse to children who show the least independence of spirit. Genuine fondness —which, after all, is a form of love—'suffereth long, and is kind . . . is not puffed up . . . seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked'. The false fondness, springing from vanity, 'seeks its own'; the true fondness, springing from the heart, seeks always to give.

"The Engineer spoke of hell: there is need, I think, to differentiate between the misery of a man who, having chosen what he knows to be a wrong course, is trying to stifle what remains of his conscience, and the further stage when a man, having killed his conscience, and having persisted in doing evil, begins to experience the consequences of his choice, sees further and worse consequences, is eaten by fear, tries desperately and wildly to escape from the net he is caught in, only to become more deeply enmeshed,—finally becoming almost insane from terror."

"Must it not be true", suggested the Ancient, "that just as 'in my Father's house are many mansions', so every individual who 'goes to hell', goes to a condition of his own making, and that, in a sense, there must be as many different hells as there are individuals in hell? Naturally there would be characteristics and tendencies shared in common. Thus, all men still at the stage of trying to stifle conscience, would seek the companionship of those who assured them that conscience was wrong, and that what they had done and were doing was right; they would cling to that companionship, would dread solitude, and would be able to endure it only while feverishly active—as the Engineer intimated. This accounts for many a wretched liaison between men and women,—the element

of sex being comparatively incidental in some cases: the man seeks what he wants, and gets it, though he invariably curses the woman in the end, adding her to the long list of those whom he blames for his ultimate and inevitable desperation. In the same way, once conscience has been killed, and nothing is left but ghastly fear of consequences, I imagine that treachery, in some form or other, must result. This is borne out by Dante, as I read the *Inferno;* for the Ninth Circle—the lake of ice named Cocytus—contains those who had been traitors to Kindred, to Friends, and, lowest of all, traitors to 'Lords and Benefactors'.

"It is clear, I think, that treachery is the culmination of other sins, such as envy and malice,—even of what may appear to some as minor sins, such as the desire to justify self, for, once that becomes an obsession, it will lead to the justification of the worst and lowest forms of treachery, to false accusation, to the violation of solemn promises, to betrayal of confidence—all justified in the hope that self, finding its position invidious and dangerous, may emerge unscathed,—blind to the fact that even the world—even the world of thieves or gangsters—neither forgets nor forgives treachery, and that the self-convicted traitor is outcast for evermore."

"Surely, though", our Visitor protested, "a touch of vanity is better than the 'inferiority complex' with which so many people seem to be afflicted!"

"They are different aspects of the same thing", said the Philosopher. "All the vices and sins have endless ramifications, both in their positive and negative aspects,—vanity especially. An 'inferiority complex' produces as many symptoms of vanity as the most swollen of heads: the youth who is morbidly conscious of his elongated neck, who imagines that everyone must notice and laugh at it, and who tries to hide it by wearing abnormally high collars, is typical under this head. As he grows older, he discovers, perhaps, that no one cares two straws about the length of his neck, if only because it is the nature of men to think almost exclusively about themselves, their own feelings, and their own affairs. But the morbid tendency will still remain, and will need to be fought at stage after stage of its expression: there may be terror of making a mistake, and abject humiliation when a mistake has been made (sheer vanity, seeing that humility would regard its own mistakes impersonally, and chiefly as lessons); there may be undue sensitiveness to criticism, followed by depression and discouragement (as if *I* ought to do everything perfectly, and as if others must expect perfection of me); there may be innumerable other symptoms of the same basic fault,—a negative form of vanity, inherently evil, because it is based on wrong self-identification, but far less dangerous than its positive aspect, seeing that the negative form is painful in all its consequences, immediate as well as remote, while self-satisfaction (vanity in the more ordinary sense) is highly pleasurable until the final smash comes; and the final smash may be postponed for years.

"It is a remarkable fact, to which, I believe, attention has been called more than once in the 'Screen', that vanity in its aggressive form has been the cause of *all* desertions from the Movement. No need to name names now; but the desire

to shine, the desire to feel superior, the desire to dominate and to be recognized as important or as the most important,—that kind of desire has led to all the betrayals, little and big, from which the Theosophical Movement has suffered, though I do not think that 'suffer' is the right word, since those betrayals have served to exclude undesirable elements, and to strengthen the remaining nucleus."

"No one could desert", the Historian commented, "who had ever been a genuine part of the Movement, that is, in more than name. Such people have never realized that, once out of it, they would cease even to be names. Occasionally, by attack, they have tried to give themselves a 'nuisance value' as it were,—the only result being a final demonstration of their futility. How many of our members have so much as heard of Mrs. Cables, who once wanted her magazine to be the official organ of the T. S. in America, instead of *The Path?* How many know of 'Peace to his ashes' Brown (W. T. Brown), although, with H.P.B.'s help, he wrote some good articles in his day? I doubt if there are a dozen members who could fill out the initials, W.R.O. There are scores of others—the wreckage of a great Movement—reminding me sometimes of the hulks on the shores of the Red Sea, or of the skeletons one passes on caravan routes in Africa: one wonders who 'they' were, so dry, so dead, so shockingly alone, stripped by jackals and vultures. It is sad, but, like all else, the past can and should be used creatively; for just as those desert bones remind the traveller of his mortality, so should the failures and wreckage of the Movement warn us that we too 'stand in jeopardy every hour', and that, if we would survive, we can do so only at the price of constant struggle against the world, the flesh, and the devil, each one of which we must understand if we would master them, instead of permitting them to master us."

"It is certainly our duty to understand these things", the Ancient now said, "partly because of our own need to realize that the 'lesser' sins, unless conquered, lead straight to 'Cocytus'; but what a blessing it is to look up, and to see around one, as well as in outstanding figures of the past, examples of devotion, loyalty, generosity, self-sacrifice, courage, simplicity, abiding faith, and of other qualities of soul which make the world a land of promise instead of grim despair! What a delight to find in some book the portrayal of a character that wins and holds your heart utterly, and does so, not because as a character it is perfect, but because it reveals a one-pointed desire to give all that it has and is, to a cause it sees as divine! I came across such a book not long ago: *La Réponse du Seigneur*, by A. de Chateaubriant,—and defy any student of Theosophy to read it without falling in love with the old man whose passionate devotion to an idea—to a religious and theosophical idea—would move and inspire a stone: an old, old man, full of kindness, of consideration, of gentleness, in no sense a fanatic, but burning with enthusiasm, day and night, for an idea; ill and suffering, but lifted above all illness and suffering by love of his idea. Somewhere in *Le Voyage du Centurion*, by Ernest Psichari, the author expresses the conviction that so long as a man is willing to die for an idea, as so many of the old Crusaders died, that man is spiritually alive. I have often thought of it since, as a supreme

test: to be willing to live and suffer for, or to die for, an idea, with no thought of personal reward either here or hereafter; and I have thanked God for the proof, during the Great War, that humanity could pass that test as magnificently as during any period in history.

"It is only at rare intervals, though, that men have the chance to die for that which they see as greater, nobler, more enduring than themselves. Usually we have to live and suffer for it, and this, perhaps, requires more heroism, because the battle is fought unseen by others, in the hidden places of the soul, where we meet with defeat daily, and yet must fight on, unconquered and undismayed, praying for that 'final perseverance' without which a life-time of effort becomes a failure. It is under this head particularly, I think, that the courage of many women shines with unequalled splendour; they can be faithful when it seems as though there were nothing left to be faithful to, and when, in cold truth, there *is* nothing left except their dream of what was and what might have been—a God-given dream, and therefore sacred, and therefore never to be surrendered. In the eyes of the angels such fidelity is celestial, and in our eyes too, I hope. Broken-hearted such women often are, but they will carry on, smiling, without a ray of hope to support them, true to an invisible spirit, above Time, transcending Space, treasured for ever in some inner sanctuary which no one, except their Lord, may enter,—because he alone will understand their tears, he alone will not try to comfort them, he alone *knows*.

"Yes,—there is beauty on every side of us, heart-searching beauty, if we have eyes to see it.

> The angels keep their ancient places;—
> Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
> 'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces
> That miss the many-splendoured thing.

"The evil is there, but the good is there too, even in this world; while, in the world that is real, in the world that touches ours at every point and upon which our inner gaze should ceaselessly be fixed, the light of Masters casts out all darkness, and reveals the sufferings of the innocent as a ladder up which the guilty someday may climb from the depths of hell to repentance and lasting peace."

T.

I said: Lord, will you not fill him with desire for thee? And he said: I have and he has turned it into a burning desire for everything except for me.—BOOK OF MEMORIES.

H.P.B.'S MESSAGE TO THE CONVENTION,

AMERICAN SECTION T. S., 1889.

April 7, 1889.

FRIENDS AND BROTHER-THEOSOPHISTS:

You are now once again assembled in Convention, and to you again I send my heartiest greetings and wishes that the present Convention may prove a still greater success than the last.

It is now the fourteenth year since the Theosophical Society was founded by us in New York, and with steady persistence and indomitable strength the Society has continued to grow amid adverse circumstances, amid good report and evil report. And now we have entered on the last year of our second septenary period, and it is fitting and right that we should all review the position which we have assumed. . . .

Here in England we have been hard at work; we have met some difficulties and surmounted them, but others, like the Hydra-heads of the labours of Hercules, seem to spring up at every step that is made. But a firm will and a steadfast devotion to our great Cause of Theosophy must and shall break down every obstacle until the stream of Truth shall burst its confines and sweep every difficulty away in its rolling flood. May Karma hasten the day.

But you in America. Your Karma as a nation has brought Theosophy home to you. The life of the Soul, the psychic side of nature, is open to many of you. The life of altruism is not so much a high ideal as a matter of practice. Naturally, then, Theosophy finds a home in many hearts and minds, and strikes a resounding harmony as soon as it reaches the ears of those who are ready to listen. There, then, is part of your work: to lift high the torch of liberty of the Soul of Truth that all may see it and benefit by its light.

Therefore it is that the Ethics of Theosophy are even more necessary to mankind than the scientific aspects of the psychic facts of nature and man.

With such favourable conditions as are present in America for Theosophy, it is only natural that its Society should increase rapidly and that Branch after Branch should arise. But while the organization for the spread of Theosophy waxes large, we must remember the necessity for consolidation. The Society must grow proportionately and not *too* rapidly, for fear lest like some children, it should overgrow its strength and there should come a period of

difficulty and danger when natural growth is arrested to prevent the sacrifice of the organism. This is a very real fact in the growth of human beings, and we must carefully watch lest the "Greater Child"—the Theosophical Society—should suffer for the same cause. Once before was growth checked in connection with the psychic phenomena, and there may yet come a time when the moral and ethical foundations of the Society may be wrecked in a similar way. What can be done to prevent such a thing is for each Fellow of the Society to make Theosophy a vital factor in their lives—to make it real, to weld its principles firmly into their lives—in short, to make it their own and treat the Theosophical Society as if it were themselves. Following closely on this is the necessity for Solidarity among the Fellows of the Society; the acquisition of such a feeling of identity with each and all of our Brothers that an attack upon one is an attack upon all. Then consolidated and welded in such a spirit of Brotherhood and Love, we shall, unlike Archimedes, need neither fulcrum nor lever, but we shall move the world.

We need all our strength to meet the difficulties and dangers which surround us. We have external enemies to fight in the shape of materialism, prejudice, and obstinacy; enemies in the shape of custom and religious forms; enemies too numerous to mention, but nearly as thick as the sand-clouds which are raised by the blasting Sirocco of the desert. Do we not need our strength against these foes? Yet, again, there are more insidious foes, who "take our name in vain", and who make Theosophy a by-word in the mouths of men, and the Theosophical Society a mark at which to throw mud. They slander Theosophists and Theosophy, and convert the moral Ethics into a cloak to conceal their own selfish objects. And as if this were not sufficient, there are the worst foes of all—those of a man's own household—Theosophists who are unfaithful both to the Society and to themselves. Thus indeed we are in the midst of foes. Before and around us is the "Valley of Death", and we have to charge upon our enemies—right upon his guns—if we would win the day. Cavalry—men and horses—can be trained to ride almost as one man in an attack upon the terrestrial plane; shall not we fight and win the battle of the Soul struggling in the spirit of the Higher Self to win our divine heritage?

Let us, for a moment, glance backwards at the ground we have passed over. We have had, as said before, to hold our own against the Spiritists, in the name of Truth and Spiritual Science. Not against the students of the true psychic knowledge, nor against the enlightened Spiritualists; but against the lower order of phenomenalists—the blind worshippers of illusionary phantoms of the Dead. These we have fought for the sake of Truth, and also for that of the world which they were misleading. I repeat it again: no "fight" was ever waged against the real students of the psychic sciences. . . . Unless prepared carefully by a long and special course of study, the experimentalist risks not only the medium's soul but his own. The experiments made in Hypnotism and Mesmerism at the present time are experiments of unconscious, when not of conscious Black Magic. The road is wide and broad which leads to such destruction; and it is but too easy to find; and only too many go ignorantly along it to their own destruction

But the practical cure for it lies in one thing. That is the course of study which I mentioned before. It sounds very simple, but is eminently difficult; for that cure is "ALTRUISM". And this is the keynote of Theosophy and the cure for all ills; this it is which the real Founders of the Theosophical Society promote as its first object—UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

Thus even if only in name a body of Altruists, the Theosophical Society has to fight all who under its cover seek to obtain magical powers to use for their own selfish ends and to the hurt of others. Many are those who joined our Society for no other purpose than curiosity. Psychological phenomena were what they sought, and they were unwilling to yield one iota of their own pleasures and habits to obtain them. These very quickly went away empty-handed. The Theosophical Society has never been and never will be a school of promiscuous Theurgic rites. But there are dozens of small occult Societies which talk very glibly of Magic, Occultism, Rosicrucians, Adepts, etc. These profess much, even to giving the key to the Universe, but end by leading men to a blank wall instead of the "Door of the Mysteries". These are some of our most insidious foes. Under cover of the philosophy of the Wisdom-Religion they manage to get up a mystical jargon which for the time is effective and enables them, by the aid of a very small amount of clairvoyance, to fleece the mystically inclined but ignorant aspirants to the occult, and lead them like sheep in almost any direction. Witness the now notorious ——, and the now famous ——. But woe to those who try to convert a noble philosophy into a den for disgusting immorality, greediness for selfish power, and money-making under the cloak of Theosophy. Karma reaches them when least expected. But is it possible for our Society to stand by and remain respected, unless its members are prepared, at least in future, to stand like one man, and deal with such slanders upon themselves as Theosophists, and such vile caricatures of their highest ideals, as these two pretenders have made?

But in order that we may be able to effect this, by working on behalf of our common cause, we have to sink all private differences. Many are the energetic members of the Theosophical Society who wish to work and work hard. But the price of their assistance is that all the work must be done in their way and not in any one else's way. And if this is not carried out they sink back into apathy, or leave the Society entirely, loudly declaring that they are the only true Theosophists. Or, if they remain, they endeavour to exalt their own method of working at the expense of all other earnest workers. This is fact, but it is not Theosophy. There can be no other end to it than that the growth of the Society will soon be split up into various sects, as many as there are leaders, and as hopelessly fatuous as the 350 odd Christian sects which exist in England alone at the present time. Is this prospect one to look forward to for the Theosophical Society? Is this "Separateness" consonant with the united Altruism of Universal Brotherhood? Is this the teaching of our noble MASTERS? Brothers and Sisters in America, it is in your hands to decide whether it shall be realized or not. You work and work hard. But to work properly in our Great Cause it is necessary to forget all personal differences of opinion as to how the

work is to be carried on. Let each of us work in his own way and not endeavour to force our ideas of work upon our neighbours. Remember how the Initiate Paul warned his correspondents against the attitude of sectarianism they took up in the early Christian Church:—"I am of Paul, I of Apollos", and let us profit by the warning. Theosophy is essentially unsectarian, and work for it forms the entrance to the Inner life. But none can enter there save the man himself in the highest and truest spirit of Brotherhood, and any other attempt at entrance will either be futile or he will lie blasted at the threshold.

But Karma will reconcile all our differences of opinion. A strict account of our actual work will be taken, and the "wages" earned will be recorded to our credit. But as strict an account will be taken of the work which any one, by indulging in personal grievances, may have hindered his neighbours from doing. Think you it is a light thing to hinder the force of the Theosophical Society, as represented in the person of any of its leaders, from doing its appointed work? So surely as there is a Karmic power behind the Society, will that power exact the account for its hindrance, and he is a rash and ignorant man who opposes his puny self to it in the execution of its appointed task.

Thus, then, "UNION IS STRENGTH"; and for every reason private differences must be sunk in united work for our Great Cause. . . .

As regards our means of spreading knowledge, we have in the West *Lucifer*, the *Path* and T. P. S. pamphlets. All these have brought us into contact with numerous persons of whose existence we should not have otherwise become aware. Thus they are all of them necessary to the Cause, as is also the attempt to influence the public mind by aid of the general Press. I regret to say that several co-workers on *Lucifer* have now left it and the Society for precisely such personal differences as those alluded to above, and have now become antagonistic, not only to me personally, but to the system of thought which the Theosophical Society inculcates. . . .

Thus, as I have already said, our chief enemies are public prejudice and crass obstinacy from a materialistic world; the strong "personality" of some of our own members; the falsification of our aims and name by money-loving charlatans; and, above all, the desertion of previously devoted friends who have now become our bitterest enemies.

Truly were those words wise which are attributed to Jesus in the Gospels. We sow our seed and some falls by the way-side on heedless ears; some on stony ground, where it springs up in a fit of emotional enthusiasm, and presently, having no root, it dies and "withers away". In other cases the "thorns" and passions of a material world choke back the growth of a goodly fruitage, and it dies when opposed to the "cares of life and the deceitfulness of riches". For, alas, it is only in a few that the Seed of Theosophy finds good ground and brings forth a hundred-fold.

But our union is, and ever will be, our strength, if we preserve our ideal of Universal Brotherhood. It is the old "In hoc signo vinces" which should be our watch-word, for it is under its sacred flag that we shall conquer.

And now a last and parting word. My words may and will pass and be for-

gotten, but certain sentences from letters written by the Masters will never pass, because they are the embodiment of the highest practical Theosophy. I must translate them for you:—

". . . Let not the fruit of good Karma be your motive; for your Karma, good or bad, being one and the common property of all mankind, nothing good or bad can happen to you that is not shared by many others. Hence your motive, being selfish, can only generate a double effect, good and bad, and will either nullify your good action, or turn it to another man's profit." "There is no happiness for one who is ever thinking of self and forgetting all other Selves."

"The Universe groans under the weight of such action (Karma), and none other than self-sacrificial Karma relieves it. . . . How many of you have helped humanity to carry its smallest burden, that you should all regard yourselves as Theosophists. Oh, men of the West, who would play at being the Saviours of mankind before you even spare the life of a mosquito whose sting threatens you! would you be partakers of Divine Wisdom or true Theosophists? Then do as the gods when incarnated do. Feel yourselves the vehicles of the whole of humanity, mankind as part of yourselves, and act accordingly."

These are golden words; may you assimilate them! This is the hope of one who signs herself most sincerely the devoted sister *and servant* of every true follower of the Masters of Theosophy.

Yours fraternally,
H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Many people hear only what they want to hear; some hear only what they do not want to hear; others hear a little of both. Hardly any hear what is said.—ANON.

Lord, there are sounds of a sword in your words, and of a terrible demand in your appeals.—PIERRE CHARLES.

Life is a melting-pot in which souls are formed for heaven; and for this melting-pot there is always the flame which one has merited. O you who understand these things, and who yearn for the heights and for sanctity, let sorrow have its way with you. He who directs it all, knows better than you where to apply the graving-tool.—M. BOUGAUD.

REVIEWS

A Manual of Buddhism, by Mrs. Rhys Davids, President of the Pali Text Society; the Sheldon Press, London; price, *7s. 6d.;* The Macmillan Company, New York; price, $2.00.

Clemenceau remarked that Buddhism was a religion after his own heart, for he found in it no reference to prayer, to the soul or to God. It is often asserted by Orientalists and others who ought to know better, that Gautama Buddha was a rationalist and agnostic of the Nineteenth Century type. The Master of the Sakyas has been saluted as the first ethical positivist, while ever since the time of Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, professional pessimists have looked upon him as a sort of patron saint. Surely no man of genius has ever been more admired for qualities which he did not possess.

It would be unfair to argue that these misinterpretations are nothing but subjective inventions in the minds of Occidentals unaccustomed to the subtilties of Oriental thought. In a measure they are almost justified by the tone of many sections of the Southern Buddhist canon. This is particularly true of the Hinayana commentaries upon the sayings attributed to the Buddha; but the sayings themselves are often sufficiently agnostic or pessimistic in their form of expression to make one wonder what is their real meaning. Mrs. Rhys Davids raises the question whether they are really authentic, whether the Hinayana monks and schoolmen who compiled the Pali Texts did not alter the Master's words, adding and suppressing passages to make the original teaching conform to their own ideas.

Her motive in seeking a solution to the problem thus presented is made very clear. She refuses to admit, with the rank and file of Orientalists, that a spiritual genius of the first magnitude, such as the Buddha must have been, would have always used the language which the Hinayana "theologians" ascribe to him. In *A Manual of Buddhism*, she uses all her remarkable scholarly attainments in an effort to prove that the Pali Texts do not accurately transmit either the Buddha's ideas or the most important incidents of his life.

She sets herself no light task, for she tries to reconstitute the basic tenets of Buddhism by accepting the Pali Texts as authentic whenever they support her preconceived notion of what the Buddha's doctrine must have been. We have no quarrel with the hypothesis that the Buddha has been terribly misrepresented by the Church which pretends to speak in his name. But her method of prov-

ing this hypothesis is open to serious objections. She does not distinguish sufficiently between the scriptures themselves and the interpretations which have effectively veiled their meaning. She virtually rejects as a "pious forgery" every sentence, which she cannot readily harmonize with her preconceptions, and even goes so far as to question the authenticity of the "Noble Eight-fold Path", because she imagines that the Buddha must have given a different version of the Way to liberation. This is not the method of the soundest scholarship, nor is it that which is recommended to students of Theosophy in their search for the truth in any religion or philosophy. It is not suggested that every word of all the so-called scriptures of the world must be considered sacred and irreplaceable; but only that it is wiser to meditate upon the texts as they are rather than to try to remodel them. No one will question the forbidding outer form of much of the *Vinaya* and *Sutta* literature, but it is none the less rich in inward significance for him who knows how and where to look.

It is unfortunate that she has not followed another line of investigation to prove her case, for the view of the Buddha which she presents would seem to be vindicated both by historical fact and in terms of common sense. Like Edmond Holmes, the author of *The Creed of Buddha*, she believes that Sakyamuni's teaching can only be understood, if it be conceived as a continuation of the wisdom of the Upanishads. Like all the *rishis* of India's immemorial past, he insisted upon the "divine possibilities" in man. He repeated the ancient doctrine of the Higher Self (the *atman*), only changing the old forms of speech when these had become lifeless or corrupt, for he was as truly a Vedic Master as Yajnavalkya of the Upanishads. Above all, she emphasizes the idea of spiritual "Becoming" as the very nucleus of the "primitive" Buddhist discipline. It was the supreme tragedy of Buddhism, as she conceives it, that the official Church which claimed descent from the original group of Buddha's disciples, completely inverted the sense of the terms used in the Upanishads and by their own Master to denote spiritual growth and Self-creation. By the monks and schoolmen these terms were distorted so as to mean mere "process" or change which invariably terminates in death and decay.

"What was it that Gotama and his first helpers were banded together to teach? . . . I see it as this: Man—I mean, the very man as expressing himself through body-with-mind—is, in the things of the very man, a chooser; he has the choice between free play of will and restraint of will by rule. Life is thus a perpetual movement in decision. In deciding, he is in process of becoming what he was not exactly, before he decided. He is better or worse. He wills to be what he deems is better; it is of his nature to be seeking, through many 'betters', a 'best'. He is not seeking alone. He is aware of an inner monition to do or not to do. He can see that other men are self-urging, are restrained, even as he is. He values them as also inwardly guided, if they will to let themselves be guided. According to his heeding, or his spurning this inner guidance, he will, after death, enter upon that 'better' which he is becoming, or he will enter upon that 'worse' which he is becoming. This entering-upon is just another stage, and there is more to come. Thus he is as a wayfarer in a way,

a long way of many 'becomings'. He is with other wayfarers, on a like adventure, like but not uniform with his; each is chooser, faring according to his choice. That inner guide he called 'the Self', one with his self, yet transcending it as was the teaching of the day. Or he called it 'dharma'—'that which ought to be',—shifting the emphasis from the 'self', and lending a new weight to the word 'dharma'" (p. 192).

Students of Theosophy can find in *A Manual of Buddhism* much to interest and to inspire them. As Mrs. Rhys Davids herself would be the first to admit, she has not said all that there is to be said about the central message of Buddhism. We believe that she would understand that central message yet more clearly, if she dared to take seriously the theosophical tradition that the Buddha, like the Christ, was not an ordinary mortal during his incarnation, but an *avatar*. The Mahayana schools, to which Mrs. Rhys Davids refers with respect, venerate Sakyamuni, not only for what he accomplished as a spiritual teacher, but because they regard him as one who sacrificed an eternity of bliss in Nirvana, in order that he might lift a little of the burden of Karma from mankind.

S. V. L.

Saint Francis of Assisi, by Abel Bonnard, translated by Cleveland B. Chase; Longmans, Green & Company, New York; price, $2.00.

Whoever has stood at the close of the day on the steep slope of the hillside to which the little town of Assisi clings, watching the lengthening shadows creep over the broad Umbrian plain, or has felt the serene joy and promise of daybreak in those great expanses, will realize that it is Saint Francis' own setting—will know that he helped to make it, but that it must also have helped to make him. Intensely, passionately sensitive to the beauties of nature, wherever he turned he found them—the wayside flowers, the singing of birds, the crystal streams, the vast dome of heaven at night. "Nature was this homeless wanderer's palace . . . he rejected a fortune in gold to receive a vast heritage of stars. . . . The very fact that he owned nothing made it easier to feel that the whole universe was his."

M. Bonnard is a poet, and with his poet's quick sense of beauty, he pictures for us the countryside in which Saint Francis lived—yet the countryside not merely of his outer, but more especially of his inner life; blending these, unifying them until they become a perfect whole, so that it is difficult to consider the outer save as it is reached through the inner. In the Middle ages, such transformations as took place in Saint Francis were, according to M. Bonnard, more possible than they are now, because of the finer balancing of life's forces. "For there is a subtile relationship between the careers of all forceful, positive men. . . . Outstanding examples of humility and gentleness are not usually found in epochs characterized by flabbiness and softness. We think of our modern age as ruthless, but we flatter ourselves; it is merely blatant and vulgar. If the violence of to-day were forthright and dynamic, characters of an opposite type would no doubt arise to rebuke it. . . . The one great menace to all forms of genius is the steady and unprotesting acceptance of the mediocre."

M. Bonnard touches only lightly the outer events of Saint Francis' life; it is the highroads and by-paths of his interior world along which we are led, and throughout the book we come upon passages which make us feel that we have heard an echo of Theosophy itself. In speaking, for instance, of conversion—of our present and future as being the fruit of our past—we read: "We must remember that conversion is not at all what it superficially appears to be. To the world it is the spectacle of a man who breaks with his past; actually it is a man who finds the fulfillment of that past. Conversions which are merely a reversal of a man's beliefs are of slight importance and are more than likely to be followed by a subsequent change to something else. The only true conversion is the discovery of oneself." Any student of Theosophy would recognize the truth of this, and while to him "the past" would signify countless incarnations, the reasoning would be the same. In connection with the general subject of conversion, M. Bonnard also dwells with much delightful emphasis upon certain personal traits of St. Francis, which, when turned to the service of his Master, were of such inestimable value to his work, helping to mould it and give it life. St. Francis did not lose his "charm" when he turned his back on the old activities and interests; he did not smother all the warmth of that nature, all that "irresistible gaiety" which had made him so genial a lover of life in his youth; it was the *same* charm, the *same* joyous ardour intensified, but now irrevocably consecrated. As he retreated within, his real nature expanded; it became universal in quality. Again we listen to the echo of Theosophy—the redeeming of forces which have been misdirected. There was nothing cold or abstract about St. Francis; all the warmth of the southern sun was in his veins, and, great artist that he was, he used, even if unconsciously to himself, all that there was of him in weaving "the great tapestry of his love".

M. Bonnard feels that we cannot satisfactorily analyze the character of St. Francis without realizing that "the very qualities which mark him off from other Europeans are a bond between him and the Oriental peoples. They have the same aggressive gentleness, the same sense of the kinship of all living creatures," and: "Not infrequently there is a striking similarity in both form and meaning between his admonitions to his disciples and certain passages from the Sutras or the promises of Buddha. The prophecy that 'some day even the stones will enter into Nirvana' resembles closely the saint's fervent prayer for the well-being of all creation." While the student of Theosophy would give to this "prophecy" a more definitely evolutionary interpretation, he would be deeply in sympathy with M. Bonnard's broad outlook, and the suggestion of an underlying unity in all religions.

M. Bonnard describes for us what he calls the Three Phases of the Saint's life, and tells us that St. Francis followed the road along which genius (if no accident mars its regular development), must almost inevitably travel. The genius "finds himself, gives himself, and then once more finds himself. So it is with St. Francis. He began and ended with God, and was with men only in the interlude." The bitterness of his disillusionment (when, as the Order grew larger the Brothers became lax, and abandoned the straight and narrow path,

accepting "the mediocre"), is told with great poignancy—but his was the experience of many another, and he met it with all the strength of his own strong nature. "For the man who, like St. Francis, is cast in the heroic mould, nothing really matters except that he be true to himself. Not personal success, but self-fulfilment is his need." St. Francis "laid siege to the world in the name of love," and like many another he found that "it is not sin but mediocrity against which love is unavailing." T. D.

The Natural Sciences, by Bernhard Bavink, translated from the Fourth German Edition by H. Stafford Hatfield; The Century Co., New York, 1932; price, $7.50.

This large book of over 650 pages bears for its subtitle: *An Introduction to the Scientific Philosophy of To-day;* and though it is hardly a treatise which may be read like a novel, it does not lie so hopelessly outside the reach of one who is untrained in modern mathematical science as do so many books on similar subjects. It is, of course, impossible to present the quantum theory, wave mechanics, entropy and relativity without recourse to mathematical language, but the book is admirably free from technical formulations.

The work is divided into four parts entitled, respectively: Force and Matter, Cosmos and Earth, Matter and Life, Nature and Man. It presents a cross-section of present scientific knowledge in each of these fields, and rather anticipates the immediate future by its bold speculations and predictions. The content of a book such as this one, whose every page bristles with facts and fine-spun inductions, can hardly be reviewed adequately. One can only point out certain commendable features of the treatment and quote several paragraphs to impart the flavour of the style.

The author is a writer of textbooks for higher schools, and has approached the phases of his subject with true pedagogical insight. For some of us who flounder among the bewildering connotations which have accumulated around the terminology of science, he renders a signal service by setting forth rigid definitions of fundamental physical and biological words. Each topic is briefly developed along historical lines in order that the reader may see by what natural steps one aspect has led to another. The translator has rendered the ideas in graceful and lucid language.

The following quotations illustrate the sort of philosophy toward which science is tending,—and this is the same science which rejected Theosophy in the last century.

. . . . the world picture of present-day physics is distinctly a dynamistic one. Materialism in the narrower sense, that is, the belief in eternal indestructible matter or in atoms as "rigid lumps of reality", is thus finally abandoned. What we call matter is a sum of certain processes. An hydrogen atom or electron does not simply exist, it happens (p. 200).

The physical world-picture of to-day corresponds . . . to the old aphorism of Heracleites [*sic*], *panta pei*. The whole of simple existence is resolved into perpetual becoming or happening. But we can now . . . equally well regard the matter from the opposite point of

view of the opponents of Heracleites, the Eleatics, according to which all happening is in reality timeless existence (p. 201).

What physics still needs. . . . is rather a something which is at once matter and energy, substance and action, and that is arranged in the world of the relativity theory in a four-dimensional manifold, (this word being taken in the purely abstract mathematical and not in the geometrically concrete sense) (p. 244).

The more progress we make in solving mechanistically the riddle of the organism's functions as they now exist, the greater becomes the riddle of the original production of so extremely complicated a mechanism. Furthermore, we find crass instances in which any mechanistic explanation seems hopeless. When an organism, injured in some way, proceeds, instead of simply repairing the damage in a way which might be explained mechanistically by means of hormones and the like, to first "melt down" the whole adjacent parts, and then begin development again from the beginning, so to speak,—for this is actually the case in numerous instances—every mechanical explanation seems finally ridiculous (p. 355).

We might be inclined to regard the "organic individual" merely as a subsidiary concept serving the ends of thought economy, and say that, in reality, what we call by this name is only a wave on the stream of events, without a definite beginning or end, forming a unit for our abstract thinking, in truth an incredibly complicated aggregate of thousands and thousands of things and processes (p. 361).

Vitalism is nothing but the method of investigation suited to this synthetic biology, and the entelechy is—exactly as it was defined by its original inventor Aristotle—simply the idea of the whole which exists *in re*, or in the Platonic view *ante rem*. If it does not "run about free in the world", it is all the less a mere chimera, all the more a very real something, just as real as the causal relationships which analytical biology strives to discover. There "really exists" such a thing as a living community, an animal state, a people, etc., and these are not, as positivism and nominalism would like to persuade us in this case as well, mere *flatus vocis* for human ways of looking at things, or categories, or schemes, or whatever else we might call what man uses to make nature intelligible (p. 402).

In the physical world everything is connected with everything else; that is a fact beyond all doubt, which follows with certainty from the whole system of modern physics. Who can guarantee that the spiritual does not also reach out beyond the limits of the individual? . . . But if we regard the matter from this point of view, biology at once shows us a number of striking facts, which tell very much in favour of the enlargements of the limits. The riddle of the migration of birds, the fact that a train of caterpillars, say the processionary moth or the like, when interrupted at any point, is immediately upset at all points with lightning speed, similar phenomena in the case of ant heaps . . . are much more easily understood if we assume that a spiritual experience reaches out beyond the individual (p. 424).

From the atom to the world of fixed stars, from amœba to humanity, there is an almost uninterrupted series of steps in the formation of ever higher and more comprehensive wholes (p. 433).

With true German thoroughness the author finally attacks the problem of "brain, soul and consciousness", and "the nature and judgments of values". It is here that the limitations of the scientific outlook naturally become more apparent. Yet we are so accustomed to the point of view that we read without too great irritation:

There is nothing contained in the "revelations" of the theosophists and anthroposophists which has not been said as well or better elsewhere, though we readily agree that it is often said very effectively. We may simply remark that what is new is not true, and what is true is not new.

Whereupon we are referred to Steiner's *Chronicles of Akasha* and his *Knowledge of Higher Worlds*. For the benefit of readers unaccustomed to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, who may think that every reference to "theosophy" is synonymous with a reference to The Theosophical Society, and that theosophy is to be bracketed lightly with Mr. Steiner's organization, we hasten to assure Mr. Bavink that we feel just as he does about "theosophists and anthroposophists". But, in spite of his strictures, and like so many of his contemporary countrymen, he is attracted toward psychism. He assures us that:

> Occultism as a science is a quite recent development. As a superstition . . . and pseudo-religion, as a magic art and "medicine", it is probably as old as humanity itself (p. 519).

Apologizing for the notice he has given to the subject he says:

> . . . "Occultism is now given a much larger space than was originally the case. It must be said . . . that this is not the fault of the author but lies in the nature of the matter, since the question calls for detailed consideration at present. Our whole world-picture is enlarged to such an extent by these results . . . that we are obliged to take notice of them whether we like it or not (p. 537).

Finally the following sentence is significant, revealing as it does something of the forces which lie behind the German mentality:

> It is only on the basis of true insight into the true causes of cultural decay that a resolution can be formed, and lead to a successful elimination of these causes and hence of decay itself. *The people that is the first to make this resolution, will, unless every sign is misleading, rule the world* (p. 559).

What, then, is our final opinion of this book? Authentic in facts, clearly written, boldly and logically speculative and synthetic, rigidly bound by the canons of the "scientific method", lacking in true spiritual insight, pointing the way to "scientific occultism" and likely to turn young students in that dangerous direction—all in all, it is a revealing picture of the present and most advanced scientific thought which is trenching close again upon the ancient ways that lead to destruction. R. T.

The End of Our Time, by Nicholas Berdyaev; translated by Donald Atwater; Sheed and Ward Inc., New York and London, 1933; price, $2.25.

Nicholas Alexandrovich Berdyaev has had a series of adventures typical of the Russian "intellectual class" of the old *régime*. In 1899 he was exiled from his native city of Kiev to the north of Russia, and in 1917 he found time during the war to quarrel with the Governing Synod of the Orthodox Church. After the Revolution he taught philosophy in the University of Moscow, but his interest in religious matters did not enhance his popularity with the Soviet. He was twice imprisoned and finally exiled in 1922. He is now living in Paris, where he is the head of the Academy of the Philosophy of Religion. Something of this stormy past is reflected in the present book. He is as incapable as ever of seeing the good qualities of the Empire of the Tsars, but he has lost any revolutionary

illusions which he may have had. No one has attacked the Bolsheviki more relentlessly and more convincingly. The chapter on "The General Line of Soviet Philosophy" should be read by everyone who has the least doubt as to the real nature of the "interesting experiment" which is being conducted at Russian expense.

Bolshevism, as Berdyaev makes clear, is much more than an economic system. In essence, it is a contorted and perverted religious expression, in which all the traditional values and standards of true religion are literally turned upside down. Its driving power is fanaticism. It is hard for Europeans and Americans to realize what this means, for, in general, Western civilization has lost its power of generating enthusiasm and fervour, good or bad. For example, there are many people calling themselves atheists in Occidental lands, but few of them are ferocious in their disbelief. In Soviet Russia, however, atheism is a creed demanding literal acceptance. The Bolsheviki hate God as intensely as many saints have loved Him. That is why one can speak of Bolshevism as an inverted religion.

Berdyaev explains this state of affairs very ingeniously. He suggests that Bolshevism is the logical consummation of the line of *humanist* thought which began to take shape during the Italian Renaissance. The Middle Ages ended, when man deliberately exiled himself from God, seeking the free development of his powers without reference to any ideal image of himself in the Divine Mind. Now, at the end of his experiment in self-will, man once again recognizes his subjection to a power greater than his personality; but by a terrible irony, this power is not God but Satan. *Demon est Deus Inversus.*

Berdyaev sees, indeed, only one way to salvation out of the present maze in which modern civilization has involved itself. We must re-discover the presence of Divinity within and above Nature and ourselves. We must revive the virtues of our mediæval ancestors. He is certain that, in any case, the time is approaching when as a race we shall be forced to choose whether we shall subject ourselves without reservation to the Powers of Light or to the Powers of Darkness, to Christ or to Antichrist.

> We are witnessing the end of the Renaissance. The heights of culture, the achievements of human creative work both in art and in thought, have long since given hints of the final exhaustion of the Renaissance, of something like the end of a world-epoch. The frantic pursuit of new ways of creation was one proof of it, but what happens in the high places of life has its repercussions lower down. . . . For the Renaissance stood for a complete type of *weltanschauung* and culture and not only for a collection of remarkably fine creations. . . . The end of the Renaissance is precisely the end of that Humanism which was its spiritual basis. Now Humanism was not only the re-birth of antiquity, a new morality and a new movement in the sciences and in the arts, it was also a new view of life and a new relationship with the universe. These things came at the dawn of modern times to govern their history, and now they have come to an end, all their possibilities have been exhausted. . . . In fact, the whole of modern history has been an immanent dialectic of self-revelation and then of self-negation of the very principles which caused its first beginnings. . . . Faith in man and the autonomous forces which were his strength is shaken to its foundations. That Humanism has not strengthened man but weakened him is the paradoxical *dénouement* of modern history. In the very act of affirming himself,

he has lost himself. . . . Minds gifted with some power of intuition would readily go back to the middle ages to seek there the real roots of human life—to find man once more. Our time is a time of spiritual decadence, not of ascent. It is not for us to repeat the words of Ulrich von Hutten at the dawn of modern history: "Spirits have awakened. It is good to be alive!" . . . Man is tired to death and is ready to rest upon any kind of collectivism that may come; and then human individuality will vanish once and for all. . . . To reach the Renaissance it was required that the creative powers of man should be gathered in great strength. There was a fine flowering, and this spread over all the course of subsequent history. Man owed the profusion of this to mediæval asceticism. And yet modern man came to be ungrateful to the spirit that had husbanded his forces. He has lived on an outpouring of creative power; with time that power has become quite spent. . . . There is good reason to believe that man's creative forces cannot be regenerated or his identity re-established except by a renewal of religious asceticism. Only such a recall to our spiritual foundations can concentrate our powers and keep our identity from coming to dust. . . . By an analogy we might say that we are approaching not a [new] renaissance but the dark beginnings of a middle age, and that we have got to pass through a new civilized barbarism, undergo a new discipline, accept a new religious asceticism, before we can see the first light of a new and unimaginable renaissance (Chapter I).

It would be difficult to find a sound argument against the general thesis which Berdyaev adopts. It is becoming daily more evident that our modern Western civilization is definitely threatened with extinction. Only a potent *inner* transformation can possibly preserve for future generations even those elementary standards of social intercourse without which any kind of civilization is impossible. Races and nations have been engulfed in the past; there is not the slightest reason for supposing that we are specially exempt from the consequences of moral and spiritual decay.

Nevertheless, in spite of Berdyaev's undoubted sincerity and genuine religious feeling, he gives proof that he is himself affected by the "modernistic" sentiments which he abhors in others. For example, he sees the Russian Revolution as an inevitable "reaction against the evil of the old life which preceded it; it was a cruel reaction against a cruel reaction. To read the letters of the last Russian Tsarina to the last Russian Tsar is to understand in the very depths of one's being that the revolution was predestined and ineluctable, that the old *régime* was definitely condemned, that any return to that past is impossible" (pp. 132-133). In our opinion, this is a complete misunderstanding of what occurred. The Bolsheviki triumphed because of the disloyalty and moral cowardice of the Russian nation as a whole. All that was demanded of the nation was the faithful observance of Christian virtues which are designed to meet exactly the sort of situation in which the Russians found themselves in 1917. As was suggested, Berdyaev has not recovered from his pre-revolutionary prejudices. Also, it would seem that he is infected with the spirit of fatalism which has so often troubled even the noblest of Russian souls. In any event, we should not assume that we cannot help to determine the nature of the changes which will overtake our civilization. Nothing can be more dangerous than to assume, for example, that because manifest evils have occurred under the so-called capitalistic system, it is our duty to pray for its quick and total destruction. That is the sure way to

a universal Bolshevism. Loyalty, justice, and love of truth are as pertinent to-day as guides to right vision and right conduct, as they ever were in the century of St. Francis and Dante.

Before concluding, we must take particular exception to one passage in the opening chapter. Berdyaev says, "Theosophy is at enmity with man and dissolves his image in astral whirlpools; it now no more believes in the reality of his personality than does the grossest and most materialist naturalism. . . . Current Theosophy expresses the crushing down of man, the extinction of his individuality, of his free activities, of his creative powers." It is clear that Berdyaev is confusing Theosophy with its psychic counterfeits. He mentions as a typical Theosophist, Rudolph Steiner! It may console Berdyaev to know that true Theosophy is, indeed, the science of the creation of real individuality; that the only personality which it "dissolves in astral whirlpools" is the unreal lower self of man, the same lower self which prepares and makes Bolshevist revolutions.

S. L.

Les Grands Serviteurs de la Monarchie, by Louis Madelin; Flammarion, Paris, 1933; price, 3.75 francs.

On the paper cover of Louis Madelin's little book are the portraits of four great servants of the Monarchy of France: Richelieu, Mazarin, Colbert and Louvois. Why should one stop reading the daily paper with its extraordinary mass of world politics long enough to read about these men who died before the "New Era"? One good reason would be to console oneself with the spectacle of four men so "efficient", so far-seeing, so wise, so devoted to the best interests of their country. Respect for the experience of the past is almost entirely lacking to-day. Politicians who know nothing and professors who ought to know better, seem to fancy that human nature and human problems have changed totally in the last few years. Yet, what invaluable lessons they might learn from even so small an excursion into history as this book provides! What disastrous experiments they might avoid! What solid principles deduce!

These men devoted their lives to the service of France. Her good was their good, their ambition, their success. For it they worked day and night, sacrificing health, pleasure and even popularity. What they accomplished still lives in the nation to-day as part of its enduring inheritance. All four of them were able to do what they did because they were supported by the King. They were not obliged to have an ear to the ground for popular opinion, nor to cater to the demands of parties or classes. Madelin says that he chose them among the many illustrious men of France, because they exemplify the wisdom of the French Kings who always drew their servants from all ranks of society. Richelieu was a noble and a priest, Mazarin a foreigner, Colbert the son of tradesmen, Louvois the son of jurists and the grandson of peasants.

The small dimensions of Madelin's book should not mislead one as to the value of its contents. Louis Madelin is one of the greatest of the brilliant group of contemporary French historians. His vast erudition enables him to seize

the essentials and to synthesize them. He writes with simplicity and charm but also with profound wisdom, and from a point of view which should be interesting and sympathetic to students of Theosophy who are seeking the eternal laws and principles of human conduct and of the Divine Life. ST. C. LAD.

Vauban, by Daniel Halévy; Bernard Grasset, Paris, 1933; price, 15 francs.

Daniel Halévy says at the beginning of his beautiful book on Vauban: "No man has more marked the soil of his country. . . . No man has touched more the heart of his country. He was touched by it himself, he loved it, searched it: like the most attentive of doctors, he listened to its palpitations, and searching it thus, he found the secret way of love. Ask a school boy to write for you the names of the ten best servants of ancient France; among these ten he will place that of Vauban. Napoleon, in 1808, took from the church of Bazoches in Morvan the heart of Vauban and placed it in the Invalides; he had understood the French legend."

The third centenary of the birth of Vauban has just been celebrated. He was born in 1633, and died in 1706. He entered the King's service at the age of seventeen and for fifty-six years he served almost without pause. Halévy says that we visit Versailles, we admire, we are amazed, but we do not realize that Louis Quatorze built a far greater monument, "more grandiose, as logical, more powerful, almost as beautiful"—the frontier of France. Louis Quatorze willed it, but Vauban planned and executed it. From one end of France to the other, from Flanders to the Pyrenees, from the Alps to Dunkirk, in all weathers, at all seasons, Vauban travelled year after year. From Catalonia he writes to tell the engineers in Flanders what wood to use for piles. From Brittany he writes the workmen in Savoy what sand to use in their cement. He is present at every siege, in the front line, so intrepid that Louvois has to beg the Generals to hold him back. He knows every inch of his country, every little hill and valley, the problems, above all, the people, and, in the midst of his endless organization of its defences, he thinks of them. He always tries to save the lives of the common soldiers, to expose them as little as possible, to protect them. He asks nothing for himself but is always writing about some officer who deserves promotion or a pension. In the midst of honours, he preserves his integrity, frankness and simplicity. As an old man his great desire is still to serve, to risk his life, to carry on despite the colds and the cough of which he is never rid.

Vauban is one of those rare beings who combine genius and science with all the virtues of character. Halévy's book is not only delightful for its comments upon historical events and problems, but refreshing in its portrayal of so admirable a soul. When we have read it, we shall find that not only France but we, too, owe something to the great Vauban. ST. C. LAD.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 383.—*As I understand the parable of the Prodigal Son, it portrays the self-assertion of the personality and the evils so arising, and then repentance, the destruction of the personality, and eventual union with the Higher Self. But who is meant by the elder brother who never deserted his Father, yet was jealous of his brother, and resented the joy in heaven over the sinner who had repented?*

ANSWER.—The Fifteenth Chapter of Luke, which contains the Parable of the Prodigal Son, begins with these words: "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

The Sermons of the Buddha prove that a Master frequently uses irony to sharpen his lesson. It is a pure and divine irony, dictated by compassion and without alloy of cynicism, but it is irony none the less. The stage setting, so to speak, of the Parable in question suggests that on this occasion the Master Christ employed irony to shame the Pharisees, as on other occasions he employed invective.

From this point of view, the "elder brother" seems to be a more subtile aspect of "the self-assertion of the personality". Like the Pharisee, like the Brahman of the *Bhagavad Gîta*, he is "full of works and wisdom", but he is also full of "self". He is virtuous but he is not generous, and he finds it pleasant to contrast his virtues with the weaknesses of others. He is not a true chêla, a spiritual child of his father, because he does not spontaneously share his father's joy. In other words, he may be said to represent one phase of lower nature as his brother represents another phase. He also needs regeneration in order to become perfect. S. V.

ANSWER.—Surely we can all recognize the "elder brother" within ourselves. Has nothing within us ever been jealous of another? Has there never been self-righteousness, or inner complaint at favour shown to another who "had not worked half as hard" or "done half as much" as we? By whatever name we may call it, that is one aspect of the "elder brother".

D. A.

QUESTION No. 384.—*In the "Screen" for July we find these words quoted:—"To-day if ye would hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Will the* QUARTERLY *give some help as to the real meaning of the phrase "harden not"? It would seem from its context to be "turn, turn now"—Is this so? Is there perhaps kinship between this phrase and one quoted at Convention from* Light on the Path—*"to refuse to be drawn back by his lesser or more material self"?*

ANSWER.—The voice of one crying in the wilderness, telling us to prepare the way; to make straight, in the desert, a highway. We have been told that a Messenger is to come; that his Forerunner may come soon, sooner than we think. How are we going to recognize him? He is not going to say to us, necessarily, "I am he". We have got to *know*, of ourselves. And how can we know, if our hearts are filled with self, with the things of the world, with the pride of life? To turn now? Yes! With all that is in us, to turn, if we have not turned already. But to do more than turn. To press forward, closing ranks. To attack the evil within us, and

around us. So to keep ourselves, within, that we shall be able to hear, to see, to know, when the time comes. Until, perfected in obedience, we are so able to keep ourselves, within and without, that *our* voices, too, may be heard in the wilderness of this life; that we may do our part in preparing the way of our Lord, in making straight in the desert of the world a highway for our Captain and our King. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—I should agree with the querist in that the phrase from the July "Screen of Time" means "turn, turn now", and that there is kinship between it and the quotation from *Light on the Path*. As I read the Fragment, it is an urgent appeal, a challenge and a warning to humanity in general, and to aspirants for discipleship in particular, to throw off the shackles of mental moulds, which, superimposed upon the heart, harden the heart so that the inner ear continues to remain deaf to Divine supplication; to throw off the shackles of Kama-Manas, which weighs, debates, analyses; and to turn for guidance to Buddhi-Manas: to the heart aspects of feeling, of aspiration, of love. "The power must retire into the inmost chamber", and the ear have "lost its sensitiveness", for the "Voice of reverberations" to be distinguished; and, being distinguished, for its injunctions to be acted out in the world by individuals, regardless of *personal* preconceptions. G. M. W. K.

ANSWER.—There is a direct relationship between the phrase "harden not your hearts" and the passage quoted from *Light on the Path*. Comments on the second unnumbered rule of *Light on the Path* state: "The voice of the Masters is always in the world; but only those hear it whose ears are no longer receptive of the sounds which affect the personal life." The appeal in the "Screen" was urgent, and called for immediate response and a turning of the ear and of the heart. Have we not all seen selfish, self-centred people who were interested only in those things which affected their own personal lives? It would be profitable to examine ourselves and inquire diligently as to whether we really "heard" the appeal in the "Screen", and test our "hearing" by what we have done about it. G. H. M.

QUESTION NO. 385.—*It has been said "the Allies won the war, and lost the peace, for in spite of bravery they lacked final perseverance." Are they then largely responsible for the collapse we see on all sides, and for the spectres of even more awful frightfulness which are raising their heads in some parts of Europe?*

ANSWER.—While it is true that the Allies won the war and lost the peace and are therefore responsible for the present collapse of our time-honored institutions, we must all remember that we *are* of the Allies (each one of us), and are each responsible for the present conditions whether we entered directly into the war or not. The war is still being fought and still being lost by our lack of final perseverance. How far shall we let the enemy regain his position before we stir ourselves from our lethargy? L. S. W.

ANSWER.—One of the greatest tragedies in history is the failure of the Allied nations in the closing days of the war, through lack of perseverance unto the end. Failure clearly to recognize the moral principles involved, and allowing themselves to succumb to war-weariness, to jealousies, and unwillingness to make the further sacrifices necessary to achieve complete victory, have haunted and hampered their joint action since the Armistice to an extent which has rendered the "victory" a hollow mockery. Lack of vision, of understanding, and a willingness to compromise with the forces of evil, have enabled these forces to raise their heads and to permeate all nations and all classes. It has been said that the physical unemployment now so widespread in the world is the result of spiritual unemployment. The only hope for the world, and for each individual, is the ability to recognize spiritual principles, and to obey the laws of the spiritual world. The disintegration that one sees on all sides is the cumulative effect of disobedience to spiritual law by nations as well as individuals. G. H. M.

ANSWER.—Suppose that a man has been fighting for years against his lower nature, against the forces of evil within himself, and has succeeded in gaining victory after victory, and is at

last on the point of making his conquest final. Suppose that he stops short and ceases to fight, on the ground that the victories already gained are sufficient, and that to make them full and complete would entail such an expenditure of additional resources, such a loss of remaining vitality, such stress added to a strain already almost unbearable, as to be not worth while. Suppose that he alleges to himself, as an additional reason, the unfortunate effect of a continuation of the struggle upon the better elements of his lower nature, already buffeted beyond endurance, because of the necessity of combating their accompanying evil qualities, and persuades himself that these qualities which he thinks are better should be allowed a chance to come back. What happens to him?

The last state of that man is worse than the first. The evil forces within him take advantage of their opportunity, and turn again, and rend him. He is beset with new problems, with new temptations. He is ruled by the voice of his lower nature, which corresponds to the voice of the mob. And mob-rule, within himself, means rule by unworthy ambitions, by selfish interests, by greed and fear. He enters upon a long series of inner expediencies and compromises. He embarks upon a course of mutually advantageous re-arrangements with his lower nature, of give and take, and he finally reaches the point of total disregard for right, when it is opposed to his selfish desires of the moment. The end is disintegration, with spectres of still more complete collapse to come, unless, in the meanwhile, he comes to himself. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—Though by turning back the pages of history one could assemble certain factors contributory to the grave condition of the world to-day, the most immediate cause is the lack of final perseverance on the part of the Allies in the World War. Fighting on the side of righteousness and with victory near, the signing of the Armistice on November 11th, 1918, was, in effect, the first of a series of capitulations to the forces of unrighteousness. Until such a stand is seen for what it was, and is acted on accordingly, it leads to repetition. Thus the Allies, either blind to what was done, or not caring, continue to follow capitulation with capitulation, thereby opening the gates of the world ever wider to unrighteousness and its attendant evils. Therefore, they *are* largely responsible for the deplorable conditions mentioned in the question. They had a job to do, and, to-date, they have failed to do it. Some day it must be done. G. M. W. K.

NOTICE

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64 Washington Mews, which runs from the east side of Fifth Avenue, midway between 8th Street and Washington Square, North. No. 64 is the first Studio east of Fifth Avenue, on the north side of the Mews. The meetings begin at half-past eight, and close at ten o'clock.

During the present Quarter, there will be meetings on,—

January 13th and 27th
February 10th and 24th
March 10th and 24th

Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York. Visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.